

T H E  
**Complete Pigeon - Fancier,**  
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 O N  
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6. Rules necessary to be observed in distinguishing the Sexes, particularly of young Pigeons.
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9. Remarks and Observations on the Diet proper for Pigeons.
10. The Diseases Pigeons are liable to, with the best Remedies for each Distemper, as practised by the most experienced Fanciers.
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## P R E F A C E.

**T**HE great encouragement given to the study of Natural History in general, particularly in this country, has of late induced many gentlemen to exert their utmost endeavours in that engaging pursuit, to investigate and unfold the hidden stores of nature, by classing and displaying the vegetable and animal creation, to the honour of human nature, and the praise of that Almighty Being, who has made so great a variety of creatures to administer to the wants, to relieve the cares, and to assist in the various offices of human life.

Several eminent pens have of late been employed on this pleasing and delightful science; but as their works are systematically arranged, so are they too voluminous and dear for purchasers of a lower class — And as many of them delight in breeding some distinct species of domestic animals, there is the greatest reason to believe, that a distinct treatise on the most favourite and familiar sort, would, if faithfully executed, and sold at a moderate price, prove not only beneficial to them, but also acceptable to readers of every rank.

Amongst the various domestic animals kept either for the service or pleasure of mankind, there are few that have more admirers than Pigeons, those pleasing companions of a leisure hour, being kept by persons almost of every situation in life. The author, therefore,

fore, in order to render this new treatise as complete as possible, has, after consulting the works of all the modern and most approved writers in this valuable branch of literature, with great labour and expence, compiled a most useful, entertaining, and instructive *Natural History of Pigeons*, which though a very essential article, has been either wholly untouched, or but very superficially handled, by every preceding writer on this subject.

There is also, in the course of this little work, every piece of necessary information relative to the choice, breeding, and management of all the various species of domestic Pigeons known in England. The interest of those who keep and breed these birds to supply the market, has been particularly considered, and every useful method pointed out, for their advantage and benefit.

The most indefatigable pains have been bestowed to make this treatise equally beneficial and curious to the fancy in general, whose delight is in breeding and training valuable birds: all the distinct species are accurately described, their defects clearly laid open, and their true properties justly fixed; their very disorders are attended to, and the most safe and efficacious methods of cure prescribed; and to render the whole complete and perfect, the assistance of the engraver has been called in, who from the most correct drawings, has presented the reader with the best set of engravings that ever appeared in a book of this kind and price.

We have in our descriptions purposely omitted the anatomical part, as that is both dry and tedious to the generality of readers, and unless executed with the greatest skill, would be no small blemish to the rest of the performance, which without flattery or deception, we offer to the public, as the best, cheapest, and most useful work on the subject ever yet published.

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T H E

PIGEON-FANCIERS

COMPLETE GUIDE.

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*A New and Comprehensive Natural History  
of Pigeons.*

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THE pigeon, says a learned naturalist, is one of those birds which, from its great fecundity, has in some measure, been reclaimed from a state of nature, and taught to live in habits of dependance. It is true, indeed, its fecundity seems to be encreased by human assiduity, since those pigeons that live in their native state, in the woods, are not near so fruitful as those in our pigeon-houses nearer home. The power of increase in most birds depends not only upon the quantity, but also the quality of their food; many instances may be shewn, that man, by a judicious alteration of diet, and supplying food in  
B plenty,



plenty, and allowing the animal a proper share of freedom, has brought some of those kinds which seldom lay but once a year, to become much more prolific.

All the beautiful varieties of the tame pigeon, derive their origin from one species, the stock-dove: the English name, implying its being the stock or stem, from whence the other domestic kinds have been produced. This bird in its state of nature, is of a deep blueish ash colour; the breast dashed with a fine changeable green and purple; the sides of the neck with shining copper colour: the wings are marked with two black bars, one on the quill feathers, and the other on the coverts. The back is white, and the tail is barred near the end with black. These are the colours of the pigeon in a state of nature; and from these simple tints the art of man has propagated such a variety, that words cannot describe, nor even imagination conceive. Nature, however, preserves her great out-line; and though the colour, and even the fecundity of these birds may be changed by art, yet their natural inclinations and customs remain invariable.

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The stock-dove, in its original state, differs from the ring-dove, a bird, that some writers affirm, has never been reclaimed, by its breeding in the hollows of trees and in the holes of rocks. All other birds of the pigeon kind build like rooks, in the highest branches of the forest, and make their situation as remote as possible from man. This species of pigeon is easily brought to build in artificial cavities, and, from the snare of a ready provision and numerous society, readily submits to the subjection of man. It still, however, keeps its native colour for several generations, and is more variegated in proportion as it removes from the original simplicity of its colouring in the woods.

The beautiful varieties of the tame pigeon are so numerous, that it would be a fruitless attempt to describe them all: for human art has so much altered the colour and figure of this bird, that pigeon-fanciers, by pairing a male and female of different sorts, can, as they express it, breed them to a feather. From hence we have the various names expressive of their several properties, such as, carriers, tumblers, powters, horse-men, B 2 croppers,

croppers, jacobines, owls, nuns, runts, turbits, barbs, helmets, trumpeters, dragoons, finnikins, &c. all birds that at first might have accidentally varied from the stock-dove; and by having these varieties still improved by pairing, food, and climate, the different species have been propagated. But there are several species of the wild pigeon, which bear a near affinity to the stock-dove, yet differ sufficiently from it to require a distinct description. Of this species is the ring-dove, a pigeon much larger than the former, and may in general be distinguished from all others by its size; it builds its nests with dry sticks in the branches of trees. Many attempts have been made to render it domestic, which have always proved abortive, by setting their eggs under the tame pigeon in dove-houses; but as soon as they could fly, they always returned to their state of nature. As soon as winter begins, they assemble in large flocks in the woods, and leave off cooing, which note of courtship they do not resume till the entrance of spring, which renews their desires, by supplying them with food, and which they continue to practise till the



the approach of winter: It weighs near twenty ounces, measures eighteen inches in length, and thirty in breadth. The head, back, and coverts of the wings are of a blueish ash-colour: the under side of the neck and breast are of a red purple mixed with ash-colour: round the neck near the back part of the head is a semi-circular line of white; hence the name of *ring*, above and beneath that the feathers are bright and glossy, and of changeable colours as opposed to the light. The belly is of a light straw colour, the large quill feathers are dusky, and the rest of an ash-colour, except the bastard wing, underneath which is a white stroke pointing downwards.

The turtle-dove is a smaller, but a much shyer bird than any of the pigeon kind; it frequents the west of England during the summer months, breeding in thick woods, generally of oak. It is easily known from the rest by the iris of the eye, which is of a bright yellow, and a circle that surrounds the eye-lids, which is of a beautiful crimson colour. The top of the head is ash-coloured interspersed with olive, the chin and forehead white: there is a spot of black feathers

on each side the neck curiously tipped with white: the back is ash-coloured with a tincture of olive brown: the scapulars and coverts of a reddish brown, spotted with black: the quill feathers of a dusky brown, the breast of a light purplish red, the extremity of each feather is yellow: the sides and inner coverts of the wings are blueish, and the belly white. The length of the tail is three inches and a half, has two feathers in the middle of a dusky brown; the rest are black delicately tipped with white: the end and exterior side of the outward feathers are wholly white.

The fidelity and constancy of these birds is proverbial; and a pair being put in a cage, if one dies, the other seldom survives it long. It is a bird of passage, and does not stay in our northern climates during winter. They come over here in large flocks in the summer to breed, and though they delight in open, mountainous, and sandy countries, yet they build their nests in the middle of the thickest woods, choosing the most unfrequented places for incubation. They feed upon all sorts of grain, but the millet seed is their favourite repast. The turtle-dove commonly

commonly measures twelve inches and a half in length, from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail; and when the wings are extended, the breadth is twenty-one inches. Some naturalists affirm, that this bird lays its eggs twice a year, and, if this assertion may be depended on, which is very probable, as it is a bird of passage; it is once when it visits us in summer, and once when it migrates to some warmer climate in winter.

The turtle-dove is the symbol of fidelity and constancy between husband and wife, amongst friends, of subjects towards their princes, and of armies to their generals. On the reverse of a medal of Heliogabalus, a woman is seen sitting, holding in one hand a turtle-dove, with this inscription, *Fides exercitus*. This symbol takes its rise from the male and female usually flying together, and her pining when she has lost her mate.

The dove-house pigeon breeds every month; but when the weather is severe, and the fields covered with snow, it must be supplied with food. At other times it may be left to itself; and it generally repays the owner for his protection. The pigeon lays two white eggs, which produce



duce young ones of different sexes. When the eggs are laid, the female sits fifteen days, not including the three days she is employed in laying, and is relieved at intervals by the male. The turns are generally pretty regular. The female usually sits from about five in the evening till nine the next morning; at which time the male supplies her place, while she is seeking refreshment abroad. Thus they sit alternately till the young are hatched. If the female does not return at the expected time, the male seeks her, and drives her to nest; and, should he in his turn be neglectful, she retaliates with equal severity. When the young ones are hatched, they only require warmth for the first three days; a task which the female takes entirely upon herself, and never leaves them except for a few minutes to take a little food. After this they are fed for about ten days, with what the old ones have picked up in the fields, and kept treasured in their crops, from whence they satisfy the craving appetites of their young ones, who receive it very greedily.

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This way of supplying the young with food from the crop, in birds of the pigeon-kind, differs from all others. The pigeon, has the largest crop of any bird, for its size; which is also quite peculiar to the kind. In two that were dissected by an eminent anatomist, it was found, that upon blowing the air into the wind-pipe, it distended the crop or gullet to an enormous size. This was the more singular, as there did not appear to be the least communication between these two receptacles. By what channel the air blown into the lungs of the pigeon finds its way into the crop, we are wholly ignorant; but we have ocular demonstration, that these birds have a power of swelling the crop with air; and those called croppers, distend it in such a manner, that the bird's breast appears larger than its body. The necessity for it in these species is pretty clear, though the extraordinary mechanism is not known. Pigeons live entirely upon grain and water: these being mixed together in the crop, are digested in proportion as the bird lays in its provision. Young pigeons are very ravenous, which necessitates the old ones to lay in a more plentiful

ful supply than ordinary, and to give it a sort of half maceration in the crop, to make it fit for their tender stomachs. The numerous glands, assisted by air, and the heat of the bird's body, are the necessary apparatus for secreting a milky fluid; but as the food macerates, it also swells, and the crop is considerably dilated. If the crop was filled with solid substances, the bird could not contract it; but it is obvious the bird has a power to compress its crop at pleasure, and by discharging the air, can drive the food out also, which is forced up the gullet with great ease. The young usually receive this tribute of affection from the crop, three times a day. The male for the most part feeds the young female, and the old female performs the same office for the young male. While the young are weak, the old ones supply them with food macerated suitable to their tender frame; but, as they gain strength, the parents give it less preparation, and at last drive them out, when a craving appetite obliges them to shift for themselves; for when pigeons have plenty of food, they do not wait for the total dismissal of their young; it being a common



mon thing to see young ones fledged, and eggs hatching, at the same time, and in the same nest.

Though the constancy of the turtle-dove is proverbial, the pigeon of the dove-house is not so faithful, and, having become subject to man, puts on incontinence among its other domestic qualities. Two males are often seen quarrelling for the same mistress; and when the female encourages the freedoms of a new gallant, her old companion shews visible marks of his displeasure, quits her company, or if he approaches, it is only to chastise her. Many instances have been known when two males, being dissatisfied with their respective mates, have thought fit to make an exchange, and have lived in peace and friendship with the new objects of their choice. So rapid is the fertility of this bird in its domestic state, however incredible it may appear, that from a single pair,\* fourteen thousand seven hundred and sixty, may be produced in the space of four years. The stock-dove, however, very rarely breeds oftener than twice a year; for, as

\* Stillingfleet's Tracts on Husbandry, 75.

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the winter months approach, their whole employ is for self subsistence, so that they cannot transmit a progeny. But, their attachment to their young is much stronger than in those which often breed. This is owing perhaps to their affections being less divided by so great a number of claims.

Pigeons are very quick of hearing, have a very sharp sight, and when pursued by the hawk or kite, and are obliged to exert themselves, are exceedingly swift in flight. It is the nature of pigeons to love company and assemble in flocks, to bill in their courtship, and to have a plaintive note.

M. Duhamel asserts, " that pigeons do not feed upon the green corn, and that their bills have not strength enough to search for its seeds in the earth; but only pick up the scattered grains, which would be parched up by the heat of the sun, or infallibly become the prey of other animals." He further adds, " that from the time of the sprouting of the corn, pigeons live chiefly upon the seeds of wild uncultivated plants, and therefore considerably lessen the quantity of weeds that would otherwise encumber the ground;

as

as is manifestly evident from a just estimate of the quantity of grain necessary to feed all the pigeons of a well-stocked dove-house." But the facts alledged by Mr. Worlidge and Mr. Lisle, in support of the contrary opinion are incontrovertible. Mr. Lisle relates, that a farmer of his acquaintance, who was a man of strict veracity, assured him he had been witness to an acre sowed with peas, and the wet weather preventing their being harrowed in, every pea was taken away in half a day's time by pigeons; and Mr. Worlidge says, "It is to be observed, that where the flight of pigeons fall, there they fill themselves, and away, and return again where they first rose, and so proceed over a whole piece of ground, if they like it. Although you cannot perceive any grain above the ground, they know how to find it. I have seen them lie so much upon a piece of ground of about two or three acres sown with peas, that they devoured at least three parts in four of the seed, which, I am sure, could not be all above the surface of the ground. That their smelling is their principal director, I have observed; having sown a small plat of peas

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in my garden, near a pigeon-house, and covered them so well that not a pea appeared above ground, in a few days, a parcel of pigeons were busy in discovering this hidden treasure; and, in a few days more, I had not above two or three peas left out of about two quarts that were planted; for what they could not find before, they found when the buds appeared, notwithstanding they were hoed in, and well covered. Their smelling alone directed them, as I supposed, because they followed the ranges exactly. The injury they do at harvest on the peas, vetches, &c. is such, that we may rank them among the greatest enemies the poor husbandman meets with; and the greater, because he may not erect a pigeon-house, whereby to have a share of his own spoils, none but the rich being allowed this privilege, and so severe a law being also made to protect these winged thieves, that a man cannot encounter them, even in defence of his own property. You have therefore no remedy against them, but to affright them away by noises, or such like. You may, indeed, shoot at them; but you must not kill them; or you may, if you can,

can, take them in a net, cut off their tails, and let them go; by which means you will impound them, for when they are in their houses, they cannot bolt or fly out of the tops of them, but by the strength of their tails, after the thus weakening of which, they remain prisoners at home."

Mr. Worlidge, who mentions the impounding the pigeons, brings to our minds, the following droll story of a facetious gentleman, who, upon an honest farmer's making complaint to him that his pigeons were a great pest to his land, and devoured a great deal of his corn, jocosely answered, "When you see them trespassing, pound them." Which hint, the farmer improved to the best advantage, and caused a parcel of peas to be strewed on his grounds, which had been previously steeped in an infusion of *coculus indicus*, or some other stupifying drug. The pigeons came as usual, and feeding on the peas, soon became lifeless on the field: upon which the farmer enclosed them in a net, and sent them to an empty barn, from whence he gave the gentleman notice that he had taken his advice with respect to the impounding

his pigeons, and requested of him to come and procure their enlargement.

As flocks of pigeons are a great detriment to the industrious farmer, we shall here subjoin the two following methods of taking them. When a field is newly ploughed, or fresh sown with any grain, and the pigeons begin to visit it, take a large parcel of small switches, or a bundle of strong wheat straw, about two feet and a half long; smear them pretty strongly with bird-lime, and place them on the ground where the pigeons frequent: but in order to draw them into the snare, it may be proper to fasten two or three-pigeons, as decoys, to the ground, among the switches or straws, and they will soon be entangled and taken. Or take some pieces of stout brown paper, about the eighth part of a sheet, twist them up in the form of a cone or sugar-loaf, liming the inside of them well, two or three days before you use them; put a few grains of corn into the hollow of each paper near the bottom, and disperse them over the field, laying them as careful as you can under clods of earth, betimes in the morning before the pigeons come to feed. As to the number of papers wanted,



ed, the extent of the ground, and your own discretion must determine. The pigeons coming to feed will espy the corn, and by eagerly forcing in their beaks to seize it, cause the paper to stick to their heads, when they will attempt to fly, but being hood-winked, will soon weary themselves, fall down, and become an easy prey.

The pigeon was the favourite bird of Venus. Homer says, it was the office of pigeons to provide for the nourishment of Jupiter; this fable takes its rise from the same word which means, in the Phœnician language, either a priest or a pigeon; for it is allowed that the Curetes, or priests of Cybele, took care of the nourishment of Jupiter. The people of Ascalon had such a high veneration for pigeons, that they durst not kill and eat them, lest they should feed on their gods themselves; and they were particularly careful of all those that were produced in their city. The Assyrians also consecrated pigeons, because they had a notion that the soul of their once famous queen Semiramis had taken its flight to heaven in the shape of a dove.

Silius Italicus relates, that two pigeons formerly rested on Thebes, and that one took its passage to Dodona, where it gave an oak the virtue of delivering oracles; the other, which was white, flew over the sea to Libya, where it perched between the two horns, on the head of a ram, and gave oracles to the people of Marmarica. Philostratus says, that the pigeon of Dodona also delivered oracles; that it was of gold, seated on an oak, and attended by a concourse of people who came thither, some to consult the oracle, others to sacrifice. There were always priests and priestesses there, who gained a comfortable subsistence by the offerings. Sophocles also informs us, that Hercules received an oracle, from the pigeons of the forest of Dodona, which foretold the period of his life.

To this natural history of the pigeon might be added a list of foreign pigeons, of which we know little more than the names and the plumage: it is true, the variety of their plumage is as charming as the names by which they are called are harsh and inharmonious. For example, the Ocotzimtzcan, is one of the most elegant tenants of the forests of Mexico;  
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but few, we are persuaded, would covet to learn the name only ; however we can add, its plumage is a mixture of yellow, green and purple. There is another beautiful inhabitant of South-America, which is said to have a blue beak, a small tuft of purple feathers on the head, the body of a deep scarlet, the tail of a bright green, and its legs and thighs milk white. To give a description of such birds, the painter's pencil is by far a much more useful instrument, than the pen of the most able historian.

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*Full and ample Directions for the building  
of a Pigeon-House.*

Having presented our readers with a copious, useful, and entertaining natural history of the pigeon, we proceed in the next place to give instructions for the erecting of a pigeon-house, or *dove-cote*, as they are termed by the country people ; of which piece of œconomy much may be said, there being a number of things to be noticed, in order to procure a pigeon-house, that will be both beneficial and profitable to the owner. In the first place, it is necessary, to seek for  
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a convenient situation, of which none can be better adapted to the purpose, than the center of a spacious court or farm-yard, for pigeons being naturally timorous, the least noise affrights them; therefore, it is not without reason, that pigeon-houses are generally erected at a proper distance from the rustling noise of trees shaken by high winds, and the loud roarings of mill-dams. With regard to the size of the pigeon-house, it depends entirely on the number of birds intended to be kept; but it is better to have it roomy, than to be pinched for want of it; and as to the form of it, the round are greatly preferable to the square ones; because it will not be so easy for the rats to come at them in the former as in the latter. It is also much more convenient; for you may, by the help of a ladder turning upon an axis, get at all the nests in the house with very little trouble, which is not readily done in a square house.

In order to prevent rats from getting into the pigeon-house, by climbing up the outside, the wall should be sheathed with plates of tin, for about two feet in height; and project out three or four inches

inches at the top, which should be pointed with sharp wire, to prevent their clambering any higher; also the outside angles of a square pigeon-house, ought to be particularly guarded against the devastations of these formidable enemies to the pigeon tribe.

The pigeon-house should be built near some good sweet water, that the pigeons may convey it to their young ones; and their carrying it in their bills will warm it a little, and not only make it more palatable, but also more wholesome.

The covering of the pigeon-house, should be well put together, so that not the least rain may penetrate through it. The whole building must be covered with hard plaister, and white-washed within and without; white being the colour pigeons most delight in, and because the building is the easier discerned by the bird when at a distance, from its white appearance. As pigeons dung is very corrosive, care should be taken that the foundation is well laid, the flooring good, and the whole building well cemented. It should also be a standing rule, that there be no door, or other aperture towards the east: these should always face  
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the south, pigeons being very fond of the sun, especially in the winter; but if the window of the pigeon-house faces the north, it should never be opened, but in very warm weather, when the air may have free admittance, which at that season of the year, is both refreshing and wholesome to the pigeons. The pigeon-house should have a cincture, made either of free-stone or parget, reaching from the projecture under the window, to nearly the middle of the pigeon-house; the use of which is for the birds to rest upon when they come out of the fields: and at this aperture should be fixed a portcullis, or sliding-blind, the sides of which must be well lined with tin, fenced with sharp-pointed wire, strongly fastened to the wall, as a barrier against the rats. This portcullis, or sliding blind, may be drawn up at pleasure, by means of a cord and pulley, properly fixed to it, and the pigeons set at liberty, or confined, as inclination may dictate, or occasion require.

The nests, or coves in a pigeon-house, generally consist of long square holes made in the walls, and these are so contrived, that the pigeon sits dark, which  
is



is a situation they much covet when hatching: these nests were highly esteemed, till the invention of earthen pots came up; for it has sometimes happened that those built in the walls, have had some chink, or small aperture, through which rats, or some other vermin have found means to intrude; but the pot being of one entire piece, keeps them out, except it be at the mouth. There is another sort made of round tiles, placed upon each other, in external appearance not unlike the shape of a water-pipe; and these are ranged about the distance of half a foot from each other, fitted upon bricks suited to the circular form of the tiles, which serve also to part the nests: but as these are not so convenient as the others, they are seldom used. As the pigeon does not always build a nest, it is necessary to have a small cavity sunk at the bottom of the coves, to prevent the eggs from rolling aside, for, though the pigeon may sit well in her nest, if this accident happens they will certainly be spoiled: particular care should also be taken, that the coves in the walls, be of a size sufficient for the cock and hen to stand in. The first range of these  
nests

nefts should be about four feet from the ground, and the wall below them being very smooth, and sheathed with tin as before directed, the rats will not be able to reach them. These nefts or coves must be placed in a quincunx order, or chequer-wise, and not directly over one another; nor should they be raised any higher than within one yard of the top of the wall; and it is customary to cover the upper row of these coves, with a board set sloping, and projecting at least a foot and a half from the wall, for fear the rats should find means to get down from the top; though it is not very feasible, how the rats should be able to get on the top of a detached building, which is properly secured at the bottom on purpose to prevent them. Before the mouth of every cove, which must be built even with the wall, should be fixed a small flat stone, to project out of the wall three or four inches, for the pigeons to rest upon in going in, or coming out from their nefts, or when the weather obliges them to remain prisoners at home.

There are pigeon-houses of different forms and sizes, built of various materials,

rials, but mostly of wood; to be seen in farm-yards, the yards of inns, and gentlemens court-yards; chiefly inhabited by pigeons kept for the table, which walk about the yard picking up the scattered grains of corn, and feeding among the fowls: there are many persons who are very fond of this sort of pigeons. Others there are, who are possessed of very valuable flights of fancy birds, which as they require a distinct description, shall be copiously treated of, under their different names, in the ensuing pages. These pigeon-houses, are always built, according to the fancy or convenience of the owner; but in what manner soever they are constructed, the same advice as has been already given, is indispensably necessary to be complied with, in defending the pigeons from the nocturnal depredations of the weazel, pole-cat, and rat.

Any lord of the manor or freeholder, may build a pigeon-house, or dove-cote, upon his own land, but a tenant cannot do it without the lord's licence. When persons shoot at or kill pigeons within a certain distance of the pigeon-house they are liable to pay a forfeiture.

D

*Directions*



*Directions for stocking and managing the Pigeon-House, or Dove-Cote; with some Account of those Pigeons that are most advantageous for this Purpose; together with an Abstract of the Laws relating to Pigeons.*

The months of May and August are the most proper seasons, to stock your pigeon-house; young pigeons being then plenty, may be purchased very reasonable; the spring pigeons having been kept up during the winter, are much strengthened, and soon in a condition to yield profit to the buyer. Those in autumn are well fed and strong, having been plentifully supplied by the old ones in the time of harvest. As to the number necessary to stock a pigeon-house, that depends upon the inclination, ability, or convenience of the purchaser; if few pigeons are put in the house, it will be some time before any advantage is reaped, for none must be taken out of the pigeon-house before it is well stocked.

The dove-cote, or common blue pigeon, being both prolific and hardy, is most worthy the attention of country people,

ple, as it is generally remarked, that the small pigeons rear the greatest number of young ones; but when the breed of pigeons proves too small, it will be proper to intermix with the dove-cote a few of the common tame sort; in the procuring of which, care must be taken not to select those of glaring colours, for the others will not easily associate with them. Others recommend the dark grey coloured pigeon, inclining to ash-colour and black; especially if she has a redness in her eyes, and a ring of gold colour about her neck; which, according to the judgment of some, are never-failing signs of her fertility.

On farms contiguous to cities and large towns, though the maintenance is expensive, it will turn to good account to keep a number of the large tame pigeons; for as they hatch early in the season, the young ones are always fat, and fetch a good price. On farms more remote from cities and towns, the common pigeons are greatly preferable; as they increase very fast, and are kept at a small expence, their numbers over-balance the lowness of the price.

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Pigeons should be kept very clean, for though they make a great deal of dirt, they do not like to live in it: care should be taken to prevent starlings and other birds from visiting their nests, as they will suck, or destroy their eggs; also that there are not too many cocks in proportion to the hens, for this is a constant source of mischief, as the cocks disagree and drive each other away, which proves detrimental to the stock. Few people make any conscience of enticing away neighbouring pigeons; but, for the reason just given, this practice becomes hurtful to themselves, and they are frequently losers by it.

Pigeons are kept to the best advantage, near those lands, which are sowed with horse-beans and grey-pease; for these pulse being sown early in the season, the bird by feeding on them, acquires great vigour, and hatches its young early in the season, which is a beneficial circumstance to the owner. Barley and buck-wheat are very strengthening food for pigeons, and cause them to lay frequently. Tares and white pease are also very proper food for pigeons. Though the common sort will provide for them-



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themselves through the greater part of the year, they must be fed in hard weather; and also towards the latter end of June, which is stiled by the husbandmen, bending-time, from the grass called bent, the seed of which is then ripe, and is almost the only food the pigeons can get at, as the pease are not sufficiently mature. At this season, pigeons in general have many young ones, and as the seed of the bent grass is not cherishing, it is really necessary to supply them with food, during the short time it lasts, which is while the pulse ripens, and as extreme hard frosts are seldom of long continuance, the keeping of pigeons in the country, turns to good account. Pigeons usually take rest at noon, and as it agrees with them they should not be disturbed: morning and evenings are the best times for giving them their food; be mindful also that they are plentifully supplied with water, that they be kept free from vermin, that the pigeon-house be kept clean, and frequently strewed with gravel: these rules properly observed will greatly increase your stock.

Various are the disputes concerning the longevity of pigeons, for it is diffi-

42 *Directions for managing Pigeons.*

cult to know how to distinguish their age; though they seldom live more than eight years, and continue prolific for the first four only; after which time, if you keep pigeons for profit, they only encumber the house, and deprive you of the advantage you might reap by others that are younger. In order to fatten young pigeons for the table in winter, take them before they can fly, when they are stout birds, and pull the largest quill feathers out of their wings, which will confine them to their nests; and the substance of the nourishment they receive, not being diffused for want of exercise, soon fattens them.

Farmers for their own sakes, should be careful that the pigeon-house is kept clean, and the dung preserved; it being some of the finest manure in the world, and claims the precedence of the dung of all other animals. It is endued with a nitrous quality, and is of a very hot nature, which makes it an excellent soil for cold, moist, damp grounds. In manuring of land, it is frequently sown in the same manner as grain, also harrowed in with it. It is of a nature peculiarly suited to hop-grounds. Tanners make use  
of

of it in preparing upper leathers : and it is of great service in medicine.

By the 1 James c. 27. Whoever shall shoot at, kill or destroy any dove or pigeon, with any gun or bow, or take, kill, or destroy the same, with setting dogs and nets, or any snares, engines, or instruments whatsoever, shall, on being convicted thereof, before two justices, by confession or oath of two witnesses, be committed to goal for three months, or pay for the use of the poor 20s. for every pigeon; or, after one month after his commitment, become bound by recognizance, with two sureties, before two justices, in 20l. each, not to offend in the like manner again.

And by the 2 Geo. 3. c. 29. Any person who shall shoot at, or by any means kill or take, with a wilful intent to destroy any pigeon, he shall, on conviction thereof, by confession or oath of one witness, before one justice, forfeit 20s. to the prosecutor; and if not immediately paid, such justice shall commit him to the house of correction, for any term not exceeding three months, nor less than one, unless the penalty be sooner paid. Persons who are convicted on this act,  
shall



shall not be convicted on any former act, and prosecutions on this act must be commenced within two months after the offence was committed.

These two abstracts are given to inform the keepers of pigeons, of the laws in force to protect them; but more especially to remove the vulgar error so prevalent among the lower class of people; "that pigeons are a nuisance, that they destroy a great deal of feed in the fields, grain in the rick yards, and loosen the tiles on the tops of buildings; that any person may shoot them, provided that he does not carry them away." Therefore the reader is desired to take notice, that both the above acts are unrepealed, and in full force: consequently every offender is liable to the punishments therein specified.

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*Account of the best Methods for preventing  
Pigeons from leaving their Habitations.*

Many and various are the means made use of by owners of pigeons, to prevent their straying from home, or being enticed away by the arts of others: but as it would be needless to insert more than is necessary,  
we

we shall here only select some of the most approved and useful methods now in practice.

1. Lay near the pigeon-house a barrow full of loam, reduce it to the consistence of pap, by mixing with it water, but brine is better; add to this a gallon and a half of the coarsest sand, a peck of bay salt, and a little salt-petre. If the loam is beat up with water, it will require more salt, than when brine is used for that purpose. If it is a good sandy loam, less sand will do. Where loam cannot be procured, clay will answer the purpose, but then much more sand will be wanted. The pigeons will be so fond of this little bank, as not easily to leave it.

2. Take the head and feet of a gilt goat, boil them till the flesh parts from the bone: take this flesh and boil it again in the same liquor, till the whole is reduced to a jelly; then put in some clean potters earth, kneading the whole together to the consistence of dough, which make into small loaves, and dry them in the sun or oven, but be careful they are not burnt; when they are dry, place them in the most convenient parts of the pigeon-

pigeon-house; when the pigeons will soon peck at it, and liking the taste, will not leave it but with regret. Some make use of a goat's head boiled in urine, with a mixture of salt, cummin, and hemp.

3. Others make a repast of millet, fried in honey, with the addition of a little salt and water: this composition is said to have such an effect on them, that they will never after leave their habitation; and is of great use in drawing strange pigeons to it.

4. Lastly there is nothing superior to the true and genuine salt-cat, if made as follows. Take sifted gravel, brick-makers earth, and the rubbish of an old wall, a peck of each; or if you use lime instead of rubbish, half the quantity will do; add to these a pound and a half of cummin-seed, a quarter of a pound of bay-salt, or salt-petre; let these ingredients be well mixed together with as much stale urine as will make a stiff cement. Let it be put into old tin pots, kettles, or stone-jars, with holes in the sides for them to peck at it, only let them be covered at top to prevent their dunging it.

When



When pigeons are with egg, they are generally very fond of lime, and it is of great use in hardening the shell of their egg; and by this means they are kept from pecking the mortar off the tops of houses; though the damage they do is trifling, their beak being not long enough to loosen any tile that is properly fixed. The salt and urine provoke their thirst, and they being of a very hot nature, occasion them to drink often, which is of great service to them. The strong smell of the cummin-seed, pleases them much, keeps them at home, and allures others that are hovering about, and straying from home. The oily nature of the earth, is a great help to them in the discharge of their soft meat, when they are feeding their young ones; and the gravel scours their craws, and is of great service in promoting digestion.

Pigeons are remarkably fond of salt; nor is there a cure for scarce any of the disorders to which they are subject, without the assistance of this ingredient; which proves that instinct the wise Creator bestows on animals, for the necessary preservation of their welfare; and accounts for the extraordinary fondness pigeons

geons have for the mortar that is found in old walls, which contains a salt little inferior to the common salt-petre: for which reason some place cakes of salt candied against the walls of their pigeon-house.

Having given full and plain directions for the choice, and management of those pigeons, that are most advantageous for country people, or others, who breed them for market, we shall now turn our thoughts, to gratify the taste of those breeders who delight in fancy birds.

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#### THE ENGLISH POWTER.

This pigeon derives its name from being originally bred in England, and is a cross breed between a horseman and a cropper; and frequently pairing their young ones with the cropper, has added great beauty to this bird, and raised its reputation among the fanciers.

According to the rules laid down by the fancy, this bird ought to measure, from the point of the beak to the end of the tail, eighteen inches; to have a fine shape and hollow back, sloping off taper from the shoulders, for when it has a rise on the

the back, it is termed hog-backed; the legs from the toe-nail, to the upper joint in the thigh seven inches. The crop ought to be large and circular towards the beak, rising behind the neck, so as to cover and run neatly off at the shoulders, with a smart girt, and their variety of plumage gives a fine symmetry to the whole bird.

Of the feather. Those composed of different colours are most esteemed, as the blue-pied, black-pied, red-pied, and yellow-pied. All these properties rise in value according as they agree with the above description; for example, if the blue-pied and black-pied are possessed of the other qualities; the black-pied, on account of the plumage, will be the most valuable pigeon; and if the yellow-pied has these marks, it will be far preferable to any.

In order more fully to display the beauties and properties of the powter, we shall here describe in what manner a powter ought to be pied, after the fancy of the ablest judges. The front of the crop should be white, encircled with a shining green, interspersed with the same colour he is pied, but the white should not reach

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the back of the head, for then he is ring headed. There should be a patch, in the shape of a half moon, falling upon the chop, of the same colour with which he is pied; and when this is wanting, he is called swallow throated. The head, neck, back and tail, should preserve a uniformity of colour, and if a blue-pied pigeon, he should have two black streaks or bars near the end of both wings, but if these chance to be of a brown colour, it greatly diminishes the value of the bird, and he is then kite-barred as the fancy term it. When the pinion of the wing is speckled with white, in the form of a rose, it is called a rose-pinion, and is highly esteemed, though it is a great rarity to find any one complete in this property; but when the pinion has a large dash of white on the external edge of the wing, he is said to be bishoped or lawn-sleeved.\* They must not be naked about the thighs, nor spindle legged, as some of the powters formerly were before

\* The reader is desired to take notice that *lawn-sleeved*, *kite-barred*, &c. and such like terms which frequently occur in describing these birds, are fancy terms, and made use of by gentlemen of the fancy only.

the breed was improved; but their legs and thighs must be stout and straight, and well covered with white soft downy feathers: but whenever it happens that the joints of the knees, or any part of the thigh, is tinged with another colour, he is foul-thighed. If the nine flight feathers of the wing are not white, he is foul-flighted, and when only the extreme feather of the wing is of the same colour with the body, he is called sword-flighted.

The crop of the powter ought to be filled with wind, so as to shew its full extent, with ease and freedom; for it is a very great fault, when a bird overcharges his crop with wind, and strains himself so much, that he sometimes falls backwards, because he is not able to give a quick vent to the confined air, which makes him disquiet and heavy, and many a fine bird has, by this ill habit, either fallen into the street, down a chimney, or become an easy prey to the cats. The reverse is being loose winded, so that he exhibits so small a crop, as to appear to as little advantage as an ill-shaped-runt. A powter should play erect, with a fine well spread tail, which must not touch

the ground, nor sink between his legs; neither must it rest upon his rump, which is a great fault, and is called rumping. He should draw the shoulders of his wings close to his body, displaying his limbs without straddling, and to walk almost upon his toes, without jumping or kicking, as is the manner of the uploper, but moving with an easy majestic air.

The powter that approaches nearest all these properties, is a very valuable bird; and some fanciers by a patient perseverance, and great expence, have bred these birds so near the standard prescribed, as to sell them for twenty-guineas a pair.

When powters are meant to be shewn, they should be prepared for it, by being kept from food half a day before the time of exhibiting them; this method will cause them to swell their crop to its full extent, and appear to the best advantage; but great care must be afterwards used to put a stop to the dangerous consequence of their over-feeding themselves, which they will do, if not timely prevented, after having been kept so long empty. These pigeons make a very striking appearance on the outside of a building, though



though the favourite sort are seldom permitted to fly, for fear of the accidents already mentioned, on account of their crops, particularly those that are apt to overcharge themselves with wind.

There is a great deal of trouble, time, and expence, requisite for breeding and rearing of young powters, for they require a vast deal of attendance, as every single bird, cocks as well as hens, must be parted during the winter season, and placed in a separate pen or coop, each of them must be supplied with meat and water, and care taken that the coop be lofty and spacious, that they may not get an ill habit of stooping, which is so great an imperfection, that it must be prevented by all possible means; in the spring, when you match them, prepare yourself with two pair of dragoons to every pair of powters; for feeders or nurses; for those who are curious in the fancy, never suffer powters to hatch their own eggs, they being such unfeeling parents, if left to themselves, as would frequently starve their young ones. The dragoons must be kept in a loft separate from the powters, for fear they should degenerate and bastardize the breed; but when the hen

powter has laid her egg, it should be shifted under a dragoon, that has also lately laid an egg, and the egg of the dragoon put under the powter, it being very proper the powter should have an egg or eggs to sit upon, or she will quickly lay again; and this often repeated, will be the cause of her death. Very great caution must be observed, and that in due time, to prevent these birds from gorging, which the large cropped ones are apt to do, and is often the occasion of their death.

A great deal of time must be spent upon them, to make them tame and familiar, for the powter should be used to company, and frequently attended, chuckled, and talked to, during the winter, in a phrase which the fancy are well acquainted with, stroaking their backs, and also clacking to them as a hen does to her chickens, or they will become shy, and lose one of their greatest properties, for which they are so much admired, which is called shewing, and this would make the best of them appear to great disadvantage, and which caused a judicious fancier to remark, that powters were a bird more peculiarly suited to watch-makers,

makers, cobblers, weavers, and such trades only, as worked in the same room where they were kept, that the lower class of fanciers may converse and familiarize them, without lavishing that time, that should be occupied in providing for their families.

The expence of raising a shew of powters is sometimes very great, for a fancier may begin with half a dozen pair of these birds, and in a short time be obliged to buy more, or be forced to exchange some of his best birds for worse, in order to cross the strain, for he must not breed them in and in, that is, coupling the brother and sister, or father and daughter, or any other consanguineous connection, as the breed would degenerate and be worth nothing. The above, and some other inconveniences too tedious to relate attend the training of the powter; and whereas the same number of almond tumblers would stock a fancier for life, for the breeding of tumblers in and in, would only diminish the size of the breed, which is a quality much coveted in them, and if supplied with meat, water, and a little clean straw, give no further trouble. The powter was formerly so much valued,



as to monopolize the attention of the fancy in general, but since the almond tumblers are brought to such perfection, and for the other reasons already given, the powter is now much neglected. Some fanciers declare that if tumblers were kept in separate pens, and trained as the powters are, they would shew in the same manner, and be equally familiar. [For an exact representation of this bird, according to the rules of the fancy, we refer our readers to the frontispiece, which shews a great variety of pigeons.]

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#### THE DUTCH CROPPER.

This pigeon was originally bred in Holland, and its make seems to agree with the country from whence it came; the body is thick, clumsy, and short, as are also the legs, which are feathered down to the feet; they have a large pouch or bag hanging under their beak, which they can swell with wind, or depress at pleasure; their crop hangs low, but is very large; they are so loose feathered on the thighs, as to be stiled flag-thighed; they seldom play upright, and stand wide on their legs, they are gravel eyed, and such bad feeders of their young ones, that as soon as they have fed off  
their

their soft meat, it is necessary to place their young ones under a pair of small runts, dragoons, or powting-horsemen, who will act the part of nurses better than their thoughtless parents.

There are a great variety of feathers in this pigeon, and the Dutch are very careful in the breed of them; for when they are fed off their soft meat, they place the young ones under more tender nurses, and then put the old ones in different coops for a month, feeding them with hemp, or rape seed, which makes them very salacious, and then turning them together, they breed pigeons with very good properties; but since the powder has been bred to such perfection, the cropper is but lightly esteemed by the English fanciers. The Dutch cropper is the most addicted to gorge of any pigeon, especially if not regularly supplied with food and water.

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#### THE POWTING-HORSEMAN.

This is what the fancy term a bastard bred pigeon, and is produced between the horseman and cropper; and agreeable to the number of times that their young ones are bred over to the cropper, they

they have the appellation of first, second, or third bred; and the more frequent this method is practised, the greater is the improvement the crop receives from it. This breed of pigeons was formerly much encouraged, in order to improve the strain of the powter, by making them close thighed; though it was the fire of the horseman's blood that caused them to rump; but since the strain of powters, is now brought to such a degree of perfection, that practice is discontinued.

They are a lively pigeon, being very full of mirth on the top of a house, and by frequently dashing off, are excellent decoys for stray pigeons that have missed their way home, which is a pleasing satisfaction to those who delight in the flying fancy. They are fertile breeders, and tender nurses, always taking great care of their young ones. Some of these pigeons measure six inches and a half in legs; they are a hearty, spirited bird, and only supply them with food, they will give very little trouble. There are instances of this bird's coming home at twenty miles distance.



## THE UPLOPER.

This bird is a native of Holland, being originally bred there, it nearly resembles the English powder, in all its properties, only it is smaller in every respect; it has a very round crop, in which it commonly hides its bill; it has small slender legs, (this was the fault of the English powder till the late improvements) with its toes short and close together, on which it trips so exactly, when walking, as to leave the ball of the foot quite hollow; it plays very upright, is close-thighed, and it is the custom of this pigeon, on approaching the hen, to leap to her with its tail spread, from hence the name Uploper is derived, from the Dutch word Uplopen, to leap up. It is a great rarity to see any of these pigeons pied, they being almost always either all white, black, or blue. Since the English powder has become such a favourite, there is little encouragement given to the breed of this pigeon here, and indeed there is no comparison to be made between them; though it is said, that in  
Holland,

60 *The Parisian Powter, and Carrier.*

Holland, some of these pigeons have been sold for five and twenty guineas a pair.

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THE PARISIAN POWTER.

This bird, though brought into England from Bruffels, is originally a native of Paris; it partakes of the same nature as the English powter, though it is not so well made; its body and legs are short, it has generally a long, but not a large crop, and is thick in the girth. This bird is greatly admired for its plumage, which is very elegant and peculiar to this species only; every feather being streaked with a variety of colours, the flight excepted, which is white; the more red this bird has interspersed with its other colours, the greater is the value set upon it; they are generally bull-eyed, or gravel-eyed, but this is a matter of indifference amongst the fanciers, which eye it hath.

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THE CARRIER.

The carrier is rather larger than most of the common sized pigeons, some of them measuring from the apex of the beak

beak to the end of the tail, fifteen inches, and weigh nineteen or twenty ounces; their feathers lie very close, even and smooth, their flesh is naturally firm, and their necks long and straight, that when they stand upright on their legs, they shew an elegant gentility of shape far exceeding most other pigeons, who when they stand cringe themselves up in an uncouth manner. From the lower part of the head, to the middle of the upper chap, there grows out a white, naked, fungous flesh, which is called the wattle, and is generally met by two small protuberances of the same luxuriant flesh, rising on each side of the under chap; this flesh is always most valued when of a blackish colour.

The circle round the black pupil of the eyes, is commonly of a red brick-dust colour, though they are more esteemed when of a fiery red: these are also encompassed with the same sort of naked, fungous matter, which is very thin, generally of the breadth of a shilling, and the broader this spreads, the greater is the value set upon them; but when this luxuriant flesh round the eye is thick and broad, it denotes the carrier to be a good

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breeder,



breeder, and one that will rear very fine young ones. The gentlemen of the fancy are unanimous in their opinion, in giving this bird, the title of "the king of the pigeons," on account of its graceful appearance, and uncommon sagacity.

The fancy have attributed to the carrier, the following twelve properties; three in the head, three in the eye, three in the wattle, and three in the beak.

The properties of the head consist in its flatness, straitness, and length; for instance, when a carrier has a very flat skull, a little indented in the middle, with a long, narrow head, it is greatly admired; and if the reverse, it is termed barrel-headed.

The eye of the carrier should be broad, circular, and of an uniform appearance, for if one part of the eye appears to be thinner than another, it is a great imperfection, and is called pinch-eyed; but when the eye is equal and full, and free from irregularities, it is a rose-eye, and is very valuable. Some mention the distance which ought to be between the back of the wattle and the edge of the eye; but this is not a property, for when  
a carrier

a carrier lives to be three or four years old, has a broad eye, and a large wattle, they will join of course.

The wattle should be broad across the beak, short from the head towards the point of the bill, and leaning a little forwards from the head; for if it lays flat, it is in great disrepute, and is said to be peg-wattled. This has caused some artful people, in order to impose upon the less knowing, and encrease the price of an imperfect bird, to ingeniously raise the hinder part of the wattle, fill it up with cork, and bind it in with fine wire, in so neat a manner as not to be easily detected, particularly by those who are rather raw, and unskilful in the fancy.

The beak of the carrier should be long, straight and thick; though an inch and a half is a long beak, it must not measure less than one inch and a quarter in length. The straightness of the beak is a great addition to its length, and if it is the least out of shape in this respect, it is then termed hook-beaked, and is lightly esteemed. It should also be thick, and of a black colour, which is a great recommendation, but when it falls short in

this particular, it is called spindle beaked, which decreases its value.

The length and thinness of its neck, are so eminent a mark of its elegance, as not to be passed over in silence; some call this a property, and indeed it must be granted that it greatly encreases the beauty of this broad-chested bird, and more especially so when the pigeon carries its head rather backward, as it shews itself to great advantage.

The plumage of this bird is generally either dun or black, though there are also splashed, whites, blues, and piers of each feather; but the dun and black agree best with the before-described properties; yet the blues and blue-piers being very scarce, are great rarities, consequently of great value, though they are inferior in the properties, relating to the above-mentioned feathers.

This species of the pigeon, were originally bred at Bassora, an ancient city of Persia, and from thence transmittted to Europe; they are called carriers, from having been used to convey intelligence by letters, from one city to another. It is from their extraordinary attachment to the place of their nativity, and more especially



pecially where they have trained up their young, that these birds were employed in several countries as the most expeditious carriers. These birds are first taken from where they were bred, to the place from whence they are to return with intelligence. The letter, which should be thin paper, must be gently tied under the wing, in such a manner as not to incommode the bird's flight; and it is then set at liberty to return. The winged messenger no sooner finds itself at large, than its love for its native home influences all its motions. It immediately flies up into the clouds to an almost imperceptible height, and then, with great certainty and exactness, darts itself by some unknown intuitive principle towards its native spot, which is frequently at the distance of many miles, bringing its message to the person to whom it is directed. By what visible means they discover the place, or by what compass they are conducted in the right way, is equally mysterious and unknown, but it has been proved by experiment, that they will perform a journey of forty miles, in the space of one hour and a half; which is a degree of dispatch three times sooner than the swiftest

four footed animal can possibly perform. This method of sending dispatches was in great vogue in the East, and particularly at Scanderoon, till very lately; Dr. Ruffel having informed us that the practice is now discontinued.\* It was used there on the arrival of a ship, to give the merchants at Aleppo a more expeditious notice than could be devised by any other means.

Extraordinary attention was formerly paid to the training of these pigeons, in order to be sent from governors in a besieged city, to generals that were coming to succour it; from princes to their subjects with the news of some important transaction; or from love sick swains to their dulcineas with expressions of their passion. In this country these aerial messengers have been made use of for a very singular purpose, being let loose at Tyburn at the moment the fatal cart is drawn away, to notify to distant friends, the shameful exit of the unhappy criminal; like as when some hero was to be interred, it being a custom among the ancient Romans, to let fly an eagle from

\* History of Aleppo, 66.

the funeral pile, to make his apotheosis complete.

In the East, they formerly kept relays of these pigeons, in constant readiness to carry expresses to all parts of the country. When the governor of Damietta heard the news of the death of Orillo, he let fly a pigeon, under whose wing he had fastened a letter; this fled to Cairo, from whence a second was dispatched to another place, as was customary, so that the death of Orillo \* was made known to all Egypt, in the space of a few hours. But the simple use of them was known in very early times: Anacreon † informs us, that he held a correspondence with his lovely Bathyllus, by a dove. Taurosthenes, by means of a pigeon, which he caused to be decked with purple, sent the news to his father, who lived in the isle of Ægina, of his victory in the Olympic games, on the very day he had gained it. When Modena was besieged, Brutus within the walls, kept an uninterrupted correspondence with Hirtius without, and this by the assistance of pigeons, setting at nought every stratagem of the besieger, Anthony,

\* Ariosto, canto 15.      † Anacreon, ode 9.



to stop these winged couriers. In the times of the Crusades, there are many instances of these birds being made useful in the service of war. Tasso relates one during the siege of Jerusalem; and Joinville another, during the crusade of St. Louis.

In order to train a pigeon for this purpose, take a strong, full-fledged, young carrier, and convey it in a basket, or bag, about half a mile from home, and there turn it loose; having repeated this two or three times, then take it two, four, eight, ten, or twenty miles, and so on, till they will return from the most remote parts of the kingdom. For if they are not practised when young, the best of them will fly but insecurely, and stand a great chance of being lost; be careful that the pigeon intended to be sent with the letter, is kept in the dark, and without food for about eight hours before it is let loose, when it will immediately rise, and turning round, as is their custom, will continue on the wing till it has reached its home. [This being a favourite bird with the fancy, our engraver has given a very exact representation of it in the frontispiece.]

## THE HORSEMAN.

It is a matter of great dispute, which remains undecided amongst the fanciers, whether the horseman is an original pigeon, or whether it is not a bastard strain, bred between a tumbler and a carrier, or a powder and a carrier, and so bred over again from a carrier; for it is certain the more frequent this is performed, the stronger and more graceful the horseman becomes. There is a species of this sort brought from Scanderoon, famous for the rapidity of their flight, and the vast distance they will go; which is the only incident that seems to support the opinion that they are an original strain; but this does not obviate the difficulty, for they may be bred after the same manner at Scanderoon, and so imported into Europe.

This bird is in shape and make very like the carrier, only less in all its properties; its body is smaller, its neck shorter; neither is their so much luxuriant encrusted flesh upon the beak and round the eye, so that the distance between the wattle and the eye, is much  
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more conspicuous in this pigeon than in the carrier. They are also more subject to be barrel-headed and pinch-eyed. This species of the pigeon are decorated with a variety of colours; but the most distinguished, are the blue and blue-pieds, which generally prove the best breeders.

These pigeons, especially when young, should be regularly flown twice a day, and as they gain strength, should be let loose, and put on the wing, without any others in company, and they will fly four or five miles distance, in a few minutes, sweeping over a very large circuit for an hour or two; this is what the fanciers term going an end: this method is of essential service to them, especially when they are in training for the homing use. These are the sort of pigeons chiefly made use of in this country, for the deciding of bets, or the conveying of letters. The true genuine carriers, are at this time very scarce, and of too great a value to be flown, except the wager is very considerable.

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#### THE DRAGOON.

This pigeon was originally bred between a tumbler and a horseman, and the ablest



ablest fanciers are unanimous in their opinions, as to its being of a bastard strain, and that by frequently matching their breed to the horseman, they will acquire great strength and agility. This pigeon is an excellent breeder, and makes a very tender nurse; for which purpose they are frequently kept as feeders for rearing of young powters, Leghorn runts, and some other pigeons, who, either breed so fast that they cannot conveniently give their young ones due attendance, or are destitute of that natural fondness, which is the characteristic of this bird.

The dragoon is a lighter and smaller made pigeon than the horseman, and is said to be more rapid in its flight for ten or twenty miles; nevertheless, if the horseman be well-bred, it will always distance them at a greater number of miles. They should be flown, and trained whilst young, in the same manner as the horseman. Amongst the several remarkable instances of the celerity of the flight of this bird, there is one supported by undeniable testimony, of a dragoon, that flew from Bury St. Edmonds to London, which is seventy-six miles, in two hours and a half.

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## THE TUMBLER.

This pigeon derives its name, from an intuitive principle of instinct peculiar to its species, which is their extraordinary motions as they are rising in the air, and is effected by their turning themselves over backward, much after the same manner that an expert genius in tumbling performs what is called the back-spring. Some fanciers are of opinion that the celebrated almond tumbler cannot perform this manœuvre; but we are assured by a country gentleman, who is well versed in the fancy, that they perform this motion with as great alertness as any other tumbler. The tumbler is a very small pigeon, its body is short, it has a slim neck, is very full breasted, with a short round head, and small spindle beak, and the irides of the eyes should be of a clear pearl colour; indeed, if the tumbler is without any particular blemish, there is no difference between it and the almond tumbler, except in the plumage.

These pigeons by their flight afford great satisfaction to the gentlemen of the fancy in general, for besides the pleasure they give by their tumbling, they will frequently

frequently rise to such an amazing height in the air, as to be almost imperceptible to the keenest eye; and there is one peculiar property belonging to them, that is, they will not ramble far like the horseman, but if good birds, and familiarized to each other, will keep such close company, that a flight of a dozen may be covered with a large handkerchief. At this height, especially if the weather be warm and clear, they will continue upon the wing for four or five hours upon a stretch; it is reported that some well-bred pigeons of this sort have flown for nine hours successively, when they have been up at their highest pitch: the favourite sort seldom or never tumble but when they are beginning to rise, or when they are coming down to pitch.

The Dutch tumbler nearly resembles the English, only it is larger, with a jollier head, accompanied with a circle of thin skin round the eye, like that of a clean dragoon, and is frequently feather-legged; the skin round the eye gives great disgust to some fanciers. It is taken notice of by some, that they are apt to tumble immoderately, and to lose ground in flying, by sinking too low

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amongst the rest of the flight, which if true, is a very great fault, though some of the English breed fall into the same error; and it must be allowed that there are some very good of the Dutch breed, not at all inferior to the English. It is well known that the genuine English tumblers, are almost always white, blue, or black; for which reason it is the opinion of the most experienced fanciers, that most of the valuable feathers have been introduced by a union with the Dutch. This pigeon displays in its plumage, an amiable and charming variety of colours, as reds, yellows, duns, blues, blacks, whites, silvers, and, in truth, a delightful composition of all these colours interspersed with the white.

There is a species of this pigeon known by the name of bald-pated-tumblers, the plumage of which consists of a great variety of colours; they have a pearl eye, a clean white head, with a white flight and tail, and are reckoned very good flyers. When they are aloft in the air, in fine clear weather, the contrast of the feather shews if the distance is not too great, and they make a very pleasing appearance; though the blue  
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ones have gained the greatest reputation for their lofty flights. There are also some called black or blue-bearded, that is, when either of those colours, are ornamented with a long dash of white, reaching from the under jaw and cheek, a little way down the throat; when this is well shaped, and they run clean in the flight and tail, as above described in the bald-pated sort, they are very handsome birds.

We proceed now to give the best instructions for raising of a flight of tumblers. Tumblers should be kept in a loft by themselves, and not be suffered to have any connection with other pigeons; for if they are once familiarized to fly with others, they will by degrees drop their flight, when they perceive their company scaling in the air beneath them; and by this means lose one of their best qualities, for which they are so remarkable. Spare no expence in the purchase of one or two birds, that have been used to high-flying, for they will be of infinite service in training your young ones to be lofty soarers. When the pigeons are well acquainted with their habitation, turn them loose, and put them upon the

wing once a day only, and that without any other company; a clear grey morning, especially for young birds, is the properest time; when after having exercised themselves, and they are coming down, strew a little hemp-feed, or rape and canary, to inveigle them in, and then confine them for the rest of the day. According to the observations of some fanciers, there are particular times, when a tumbler will take a more extraordinary flight than usual, as for example, when she sits upon eggs, and a short time after having fed off the soft meat; and although there is no convincing reason to be assigned for this, yet it has been repeatedly confirmed by ocular demonstration. When crows, swallows, or other birds, are seen wantonly sporting at a vast height in the air, is another time when tumblers will make a very extravagant flight, both for height and length of time; but this may be readily accounted for, there being always at such a time something predominant in the temperament of the air, agreeable to the genius of those birds, that take pleasure in the upper regions of the atmosphere. The fancier should never let loose his  
tumblers



tumblers on a misty morning, or when there appears the least signs of a rising fog, for by these means they are deprived of the sight of their habitation, and many a good flight broke and lost. High winds are also very detrimental to a flight of pigeons, by forcing them too far from home, and causing them to stay out all night, so that if they are not quite lost, they are exposed to various accidents, particularly to the claws of the cats. It should be a standing rule never to turn out a hen tumbler when she is with egg, she being generally sick at that time, and very unfit to fly, so that she may drop her egg by her long flight, to the great prejudice of your stock.

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#### THE ALMOND TUMBLER.

This bird is by some called the ermine tumbler, though it is generally known, and called by the name of the almond tumbler, but for what reason the oldest and most experienced fanciers are entirely at a loss to explain. It is a very beautiful and valuable species, and derived

its origin from the common tumblers, (which it so nearly resembles in shape and make, as to render any description unnecessary) by being judiciously matched so as to sort the feather, to wit, yellows, duns, whites, blacks, black-grisled, black-splashed, &c. but as these require a length of time, they are not attainable without patience and perseverance; however, when they are brought to a tolerable degree of perfection, they are esteemed by some as the greatest curiosity in the whole fancy of pigeons. Though the ancient fanciers have with one consent given the title of king of the pigeons to the carrier, yet so great a favourite is the almond-tumbler with the modern fanciers, that many of them are for transferring the title to the latter, on account of the superior beauty of its plumage; it must indeed be acknowledged that there is no comparison between the plumage of the two birds; but at the same time we beg leave to remind those gentlemen who are so very sanguine in their opinion of this bird, that the true genuine carrier, did not obtain the title altogether from the elegance of its feather, but from  
its

its uncommon sagacity, with which it is endowed.

As it requires a good judgment and nice observation to be acquainted with the qualities and perfections of this species, so it must be acknowledged that they lie under some disadvantage, in not having their properties well understood by the fancy in general, for their charming variety of feather makes them exceed (in the opinion of some of the ablest fanciers) every other fancy of the pigeon tribe. Some of these birds are so magnificently elegant in their plumage, that the rump, tail, back and flight, have been compared to a bed of the finest and best broken tulips that the imagination can conceive, or to a piece of the best and highest polished Egyptian pebble; for the more they are variegated in the flight and tail, especially if the ground is yellow, the greater is the value set upon them; for those of a fine bright yellow ground have always the precedence of all other colours, it being a colour the hardest to acquire, for you may breed twenty that are light grounded for one deep ground; besides the light grounded



grounded ones are for the most part wanting in yellow, both in the tail and the flight, which of course decreases the value of the bird; but a tail with a mixture of good black in it is not despisable. To be complete in feather, the rump, back, and breast must be variegated, and the flight not barred. There are some of these pigeons, that are variously and curiously intermixed with the three colours only, that compose the ermine or almond, as yellow, white and black, but these are very scarce. The almond-tumbler never arrives at its full beauty of feather, till it has moulted several times, and what is remarkable it increases in beauty every year; but in the decline of life, when it is very old, changes to a mottled, splashed, or some other colour.

Some fanciers advise the matching of a yellow, a splashed, or black grizzle, with an almond, and by that means lay a good foundation to heighten the colours; those of a black colour bred from almonds, are generally better shaped in the beak and head, than the almonds themselves, and the tail and flight have frequently a strong glow of yellow; this colour matched to an almond, promises

to produce a fine bird. They often breed a pale yellow, or buff, and this colour is very proper to match with such as are too high-grounded; let it be remembered that the less ash or blue they have, the better, for sometimes a slight mixture of these colours will shew, even when they have been carefully and well bred. There are some that are ash-coloured, but these are lightly esteemed.

The properties of the yellow and black mottled tumblers, should coincide with those of the almond-tumbler, the plumage excepted; the former of these must have a yellow ground, and a body mottled with white, with a yellow tail and flight; the latter must have a black ground, its body also mottled with white, together with a black flight and tail. Both of these two last described fancies, make exceeding pretty birds, and are also very useful, especially when they agree in their other properties, to occasionally intermix with the almond. Several fanciers, after rejecting the foul-feathered birds of this species, and judiciously coupling the best coloured ones together, have brought them to a great degree of perfection, and have been so well

well satisfied for their labours, as to continue no other but the breed of the almond-tumbler, to the exclusion of all the other fancy birds. Indeed, the elegant plumage of some of these birds baffles all description, and nothing but the eye, or the pencil of an ingenious painter, can do justice to their beauty. [This beautiful little bird, is finely depicted in the copper-plate annexed to this work.]

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#### THE LEGHORN RUNT.

This is a noble large full bodied pigeon, it is close feathered, short in the back, very broad-chested, and frequently measures seven inches and a quarter in the length of its legs; when it walks, it carries its tail raised up in the nature of a duck's, but hangs it down when he plays. It is goose-headed and hollow-eyed, with a longer neck than any other pigeon, which it carries bending after the manner of a goose; the eye is encircled with a thin skin broader than that of the Dutch tumbler, the beak is very short, with a small wattle over its nostril, and the upper chap projects a little over the under.

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The Leghorn runt is a much hardier bird, than many fanciers imagine, and breeds tolerably well, but they are bad nurses, and ought not to be suffered to bring up their own young ones; therefore it is proper to shift their eggs under a dragoon, or some other tender nurse, in the same manner as directed for the powder, being careful to give them a young one of some sort to take off their soft meat, and by this method they will succeed very well. The genuine breed is at present very scarce in this country, and what is remarkable of all the different species of runts, is, that they increase in size, till they are three years old. The matching of them with the Spanish runt greatly improves the size of the breed, and makes them increase the faster; some of this sort when brought to table have appeared as large as a pullet; and a certain veteran fancier of credit has assured us, that he killed a hen of the Leghorn breed, that weighed two pounds eight ounces avoirdupoise weight.

As to their plumage, they are frequently of a grizzled colour, ermined round the neck; but those most esteemed are  
either

either red, white, or black-mottled. This species of the runt, is of greater value than any other kind of runts, though there is a material difference in them, some of them being very indifferent birds, though natives of Leghorn. It was originally bred at Pifa, a city of Tuscany, which is situated ten miles north of Leghorn, with which place it has a communication by a canal, cut for the convenience of trade, and for the draining of the marshes; and from this last city imported into England.

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#### THE SPANISH RUNT.

This pigeon came originally from a sea-port town of Spain, hence the name of Spanish runt; it is a short thick legged, flabby fleshed, loose feathered bird, with a remarkable long body; some of them measuring twenty three inches in length, from the apex of the beak, to the extreme end of the tail, and it does not carry itself so upright as the Leghorn runt. The feathers of this are so uncertain, and of such a variety of colours, that a judgment cannot be formed of the sort by the colour,

colour, though some of the best are reported to be of a blood-red, or mottled colour. This bird being so very short-legged, is the cause of its breaking its eggs, by its sitting too heavy on them in the nest: to remedy this misfortune, some put a pair of neat chalk or ivory eggs into the nest, and by that means prevent the bird's sitting too heavy on the real eggs; others treat them in the same manner as they do the Leghorn runt, already described. There is a long-legged pigeon, which nearly resembles the Spanish runt, and is said to be brought from their settlements in the West-Indies.

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THE RUNT OF FRIESLAND.

This bird is a native of the United Province of Friesland; it is somewhat larger than a middle sized runt, its feathers are all inverted, and stand the wrong way; if this pigeon has its fanciers, it must be because it is uncommon and disgusting, for the bird really makes a frightful appearance; they are at present very scarce in this country. There

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are several other kind of runts, as the feather-footed runt of Smyrna: it is a middle sized pigeon, with so many feathers sprouting from the outside of its feet, as to have the appearance of small wings; some of these feathers measure four inches and a half in length, for this reason these birds ought to be kept very dry and clean, or these long feathers on the feet occasion their dragging their eggs or young ones out of their nest. There is the large Roman runt, which is so big and unwieldly it can scarcely fly; also the common domestic runts, which always compose that medley of pigeons, kept on purpose for the table, and are so very common in inn-yards and other places, as to need no description: these last sort are good feeders, and make very useful nurses for the better sort of pigeons.

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#### THE TRUMPETER.

This pigeon is nearly as big as a middle-sized runt, and very like it in shape and make; its legs and feet are covered with feathers; the crown of its head is very round, like that of the finnikin and  
nun,



nun, only it is larger, and the larger the head is, the more it is esteemed, as being usually more melodious; it is in general pearl-eyed, and black-mottled as to its feather; but the surest mark to distinguish a good trumpeter, is the tuft of feathers which sprouts from the root of the beak, and the larger this tuft grows, the greater is the value set upon the bird. The more falacious it is the more it will trumpet: it derives its name from its imitating the sound of a trumpet after playing, which it always does in the spring of the year, when that genial season returns, which gives as it were new life and vigour to the whole creation; those who are fond of hearing it trumpet at other times, feed it very high with hemp-seed, which makes them lecherous, and always has the desired effect.

This bird and the ensuing species of pigeons, are by the gentlemen of the fancy denominated toys.

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THE SPOT.

From whence this pigeon derived its origin is uncertain, but it was first im-

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ported into this country from Holland; it has its name from a spot just above its beak, upon the top of its head: the tail feathers are for the most part of the same colour with the spot, but the body is generally all white. The tail and spot in some of these birds are either yellow, red, or black; there are some blue, but these are rare; they make an exceeding pretty appearance when they spread their tails to fly, and what is remarkable in this species is, that they always breed their young ones of the same colour with themselves.

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#### THE LAUGHER.

This pigeon is a native of Palestine in Asia, and was brought into Europe by the ships which trade to and from Turkey. This bird in shape and make very much resembles a middle sized runt; its plumage is generally red-mottled, but sometimes it is blue, and it has a very bright clear pearl eye, inclining to a white. When the cock seeks for and begins to lack the hen, he has a kind of rough coo, like the bubbling of water poured from a jug,

jug, and then makes a rattling noise, very much like a gentle convulsive laugh, and from this the bird derives its name.

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### THE NUN.

This is a small pigeon, and from the pleasing contrast in its feathers, greatly attracts the notice of the beholder; the plumage is so remarkable that its head is almost covered with a veil of feathers, which gives it the name of the nun. Its body is chiefly all white, its head, tail, and the six flight feathers of its wings should be entirely red, yellow, or black; that is, when its head is red, its flight and tail should be red also, and when its head is yellow, its flight and tail should be yellow; and when its head is black, its flight and tail should also be of the same colour; and agreeable to this they are called either red-headed, yellow-headed, or black-headed nuns, and whenever the colour of the feathers differs from these rules, they are termed foul; for example, should a red-headed bird, have a black, or any different colour in its head, except red, it would be termed

foul-headed; or a white feather in its flight, it is then foul-flighted; and in like manner with the yellow and black-headed ones: it is to be observed that the best of them have frequently a few foul feathers, but when this happens in the least degree, it decreases their value, though they often rear as pure feathered birds, as those that are perfect. The nun should have a pearl eye, with a small beak and head; its head should be covered with a hood of white feathers, rising from the back part of the head, and the larger this tuft or hood is, the handsomer is the appearance the bird makes.

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#### THE HELMET.

This pigeon is something larger than the nun; the head, tail, and flight feathers of the wings, for the most part, preserve a uniformity of colour, either yellow, red, blue, or black, but all the rest of its body is generally white, so that the most material difference between it and the nun is, the former has no hood on the back part of the head, and is frequently



frequently gravel-eyed. They receive the name of helmets from their heads being ornamented with a tuft of fine soft feathers, which are always of a different colour from the body, and from its faint resemblance to that ancient piece of armour formerly worn as a covering for the head.

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#### THE JACOBINE.

This pigeon is usually called for shortness, the jack; it is a very pretty bird, but very good birds of this species are exceeding scarce, the genuine breed being greatly degenerated by an imprudent method of intermixing them with the ruff, with a view of improving the chain by the length of the ruff's feathers; but by this ill-judged practice, the chain is greatly detrimented: the bird bred larger, is much flimsier in its hood and chain, with an additional length of beak; in a word, it is worsted in all its original properties; for the real jack, is one of the smallest pigeons, and the less they are, the more they are valued: it has a range of inverted feathers on the back part of its

its head, which turns towards the neck, like the cap or cowl of a monk, from hence this bird derives its name of jacobine, or capper as some call it; the religious of that order wearing cowls or caps, joined to their garments for the covering of their bald pates. Therefore the upper part of this feathered covering is called the hood, and the more compact and close this feathered ornament grows to the head of the bird, so much the more does it enhance its value amongst the curious: The Dutch stile the lower part of this range of feathers, the cravat, but with us it is called the chain. The feathers which compose this chain should be long and thick, so that by laying hold of the bill, and giving the neck a gentle stretch, the two sides should lap over each other, as has been often experienced in some of the best birds of this species; but real good ones are very scarce in this country. Though this breed has been much neglected with us, our neighbours the Dutch and French breed them to great perfection. A few summers ago, an eminent fancier and great naturalist, purchased six pair of these pigeons at Rotterdam, and transmitted them

them over to England, with a view of establishing the true original breed in his native country, but his design was unfortunately frustrated by a merciless cat, who accidentally got into the loft where they were kept, and destroyed them all, to the great regret of all those who are curious in the fancy, as they are by far the prettiest pigeon of the toy kind.

The real jacobine is possessed of a very small head, with a short spindle beak, and clear pearl eye, and the less these properties are the better. As to its plumage, there are yellows, reds, mottled, blues and blacks; though the yellow coloured birds always claim the precedence, yet of whatever colour they prove to be, they must always have a white tail and flight, and a clean white head; the legs and feet of some of these birds are covered with feathers, others are naked and without any, but this is of no signification, as each sort has its admirers.

Dealers in pigeons, like dealers in horses, practise various arts to take in the unwary, and impose upon the credulity of the less knowing; and they have a method of artificially raising the chain and hood of this pigeon, which they term

term coaxing it; this they do by clipping the feathers at the hinder part of the head and neck, and constantly stroking the chain and hood towards the head; besides, when they find it necessary, they cut out a small piece of skin from between the chest and the throat, and immediately stitch it up again, by which means the chain becomes closer, and such adepts are some of the dealers in this art, as to make an indifferent bird fetch a good price.

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#### THE RUFF.

There is so great a similarity, both in shape and make, between the jacobine and this bird, that the latter has been frequently sold for the former, but the ruff has a longer beak, and larger head, it is also rather a larger pigeon; the irides of its eyes are in some of a gravel, in others of a pearl colour; the chain does not flow so near to the shoulders of its wings, though both the hood and chain are longer, but are nothing near so close and compact as the others; and are easily disturbed with every puff of wind; they like-  
wise



wife fall more backward off the head, in a ruffled discomposed form, and from this the pigeon receives its name. The plumage of this bird is also so similar with that of the jack, that it is not at all surprizing, that those who were not well acquainted with the properties of the genuine jack, should be put off with a ruff in its place; but the above description sufficiently distinguishes the two birds, and the reader, by paying a proper attention to it, may easily discover the deception, and prevent his being imposed upon.

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## THE TURBIT.

This pigeon is by some supposed to derive its name from a corruption of the word cortbeck, or curtbeke, as it is called by the Dutch, which word seems to be originally derived from the French, court-bec, and signifies a short bill, for which this pigeon is remarkable. It is a small pigeon, very little bigger than a jacobine; it has a round button head, and the shorter the beak is the better; it has a tuft of feathers growing from the breast,

breast, which opens and spreads both ways, sprouting out like the chitterlin of a shirt : this is called the purle, it has also a gullet which reaches from the beak to the purle ; this bird is admired according to the largeness of its purle. As to the plumage, there are yellows, duns, reds, blues, blacks, and some that are chequered ; the back of its wings and the tail should be of one entire colour, the yellow and red coloured ones excepted, whose tails must be white ; and there ought to be bars of black across the wings of the blue coloured ones ; but the rest of the body and the flight feathers ought to be white, and the fanciers term them yellow-shouldered, red-shouldered, blue-shouldered turbits, &c. agreeable to the colour they are of. They are very gentle, airy pigeons, and make very good flyers, if properly trained when young. A veteran fancier of some note has informed us, that he trained a flight of these birds, which for their lofty soaring, seemed to dispute the palm with his tumblers. There are some of this species which are of one uniform colour, being all black, blue, or white, which have

have frequently been mistaken and sold for owls.

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THE OWL.

This bird has a mild, pleasant, insinuating aspect, it is rather less than a jacobine, with a gravel-eye, and a very short hooked beak, much resembling that of an owl and from this the bird derives its name. The purle in this bird is rather larger, and opens and expands itself more like a rose, than that of the turbits; but in every other respect, both in shape, make, and plumage, this bird is so very like the turbit, the beak excepted, as to render any further description needless. Particular care ought to be taken, that the breeding places where these birds sit, are made dark and private, for they are naturally so very wild and timid, that the least noise affrights them, and when disturbed will fly off their eggs. This bird seems to dispute the palm in point of beauty with the jack.

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THE CAPUCHIN.

This bird, like the jacobine, receives its name from another order of bare-headed

headed monastics: it has a longer beak than the jack, and is somewhat larger in its body; it has no chain, but a very pretty hood, and is in plumage and other properties the same as the jack. Some fanciers positively assert it to be a distinct species, others again as confidently affirm it to be a bastard-breed, between a jacobine and some other pigeon; however it is beyond a doubt, that a jack and another pigeon will breed a bird so exactly similar to it, as will greatly embarrass the fanciers of this first persuasion to distinguish between it, and what they term their separate species. Though all the pigeons of the toy kind have their respective admirers; the capuchin is but lightly esteemed by the fancy in general.

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#### THE FINNIKIN.

This pigeon in make, shape and size, differs very little from the common runt; the crown of its head is formed very like the head of a snake, it has a gravel-eye, with a tuft of feathers growing on the back part of its crown, which falls down its neck, hanging like a horse's mane; it has a clean leg and foot, and its plumage



*The Turner, and Broad Tailed Shaker. 99*

mage is always blue or black pied. This pigeon, when wanton, is addicted to very odd antics, it first rises over its hen, spreading and flapping its wings, and turns round three or four times; it then reverses, and turns as many times the contrary way. Many fanciers are prejudiced against this sort for their whimsical gestures, as being apt to teach their other strains ill habits, and making a hen to squat by these whimsies; but in truth, they are no more dangerous in this respect than any other pigeon, when the lecherous fit is on it.

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THE TURNER.

This pigeon is in so many respects like the finnikin, that very little more remains to be said about it, than to point out the difference between them; it is not snake-headed, and the tuft on the back part of the crown is wanting; and when the wanton fit is on it, and it plays to the female, it turns only one way, whereas the finnikin turns both.

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THE BROAD TAILED SHAKER.

This pigeon, especially when lustful has a frequent tremulous motion, or

shaking in the neck, which joined to the breadth of its tail when spread, gives the bird the name of broad-tailed shaker. This bird is possessed of a long, taper, handsome neck, which it erects in a serpentine form, rather leaning towards its back, somewhat like the neck of a swan; it has a very short back, and is exceedingly full breasted, with a tail composed of a vast number of feathers, very seldom less than four and twenty, and never exceeding six and thirty, which it spreads in a very striking manner, like the tail of a turkey-cock, and raises it up to such a degree, that the tail appears joined to the head, in the nature of a squirrel's, and from hence some fanciers give them the name of fan-tails; but when it is so crowded with feathers, it occasions it frequently to droop its tail, and hinders it from throwing it up to meet its head, which is so great an imperfection in the opinion of the fancy, as never to be overlooked, be all the other properties of the bird ever so perfect; though a very large tailed bird of this species, which carries its tail according to the rules of the fancy, is a great rarity, and of great value.

Though

Though the general colour of its plumage is entirely white, there are yellow, red, blue and black-pieds, and some all blue; but the whites are the favourite birds, as they have by far the noblest carriage both in their tail and head. There is another kind of broad-tailed shakers, which differ in nothing from the above-described bird, the neck excepted, which is shorter and thicker; but the shaker with the longest neck is by far the handsomest and most valuable bird.

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THE NARROW-TAILED SHAKER.

Fanciers are divided in their opinions concerning this pigeon, some say it is a distinct species, others that it is only a bastard strain between the broad-tailed shaker and some other pigeon; its back is longer, and its neck shorter and thicker than that of the last described bird: it has also a less number of feathers in its tail, which it does not spread out so much as the other does, but lets them fall as it were double, the one side folding over the other, in the nature of a fan when three parts opened, and is very apt to fall into the fault of letting its tail droop very much. In regard to the co-



102 *The Barbary Pigeon, or Barb.*

lour of its plumage, it is usually white, though like the broad-tailed shaker there are some of various colours; and a certain fancier of distinction had amongst his collection some almond of this sort, but that is a great rarity.

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THE BARBARY PIGEON, OR BARB.

This pigeon is originally a native of Barbary in Africa, and receives its names from the country from whence it came, but the name is contracted, and it is now called by no other name than the barb. This bird is in size rather larger than a jacobine, it has a short thick beak like a bull-finch, encrusted with a small wattle, and a naked circle of a thick spongy red skin round about its eyes, like that of the carrier; when the feathers of the pinion are inclinable to a dark colour, the irides of its eyes are of a pearl colour, but when the pinion feathers are white, the irides are red, as is observable in some other birds; the redder in colour, and the wider the circle of tuberos flesh round the eye spreads, the greater is the value set upon the bird, though this circle is very narrow at first, and does not arrive at its full size, till the  
bird



bird is four years old. Some of this species are ornamented with a pretty tuft of feathers, sprouting from the back part of the crown of its head, resembling that of the finnikin, but others there are without any. The plumage of the original barb, is either dun or black, for though there are piers of both these colours, fanciers in general set but little store by them, as they are supposed to be bred from a barb and a mahomet. A certain learned ornithologist in his description of this pigeon, has fallen into a great mistake, where he supposes the tuberos flesh to be of a white colour in some of this species, which it never is; but when the bird is not well, it will indeed turn paler; yet upon its recovery, this luxuriant flesh always re-assumes its natural redness.

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#### THE MAHOMET.

A late celebrated fancier of good repute, used to affirm, that this pigeon is in reality only a white barb, which colour gave the red tuberos circle round its eyes a very fine effect; but some modern fanciers give a different account, and describe the bird in the following manner.

The

The pigeon, named Mahomet, is of a fine cream colour, with black bars across its wings; its feathers are very remarkable, for though the outside, or surface of them, is of a cream, yet the underside, or that part next the body is of a dark fuddy colour, as is also its skin and flue feathers, which is peculiar to this pigeon; it is about the size of a turbit, and instead of a frill, has a fine gullet, with a handsome seam of feathers; it has a thick, short made head, with an orange coloured eye, encompassed with a small naked circle of black flesh; its beak has a small black wattle on it, and is short and thick, like that of the bull-finch. Some are of opinion that this bird is of a mixed strain, between a turbit and some other pigeon.

All that remains to be added respecting this pigeon, is to lay before our readers the general received opinion, from whence this bird takes its name. Mahomet, the prophetic impostor, and first propagator of the Turkish persuasion, and author of the Alcoran, or book of laws by which it is governed, is reported by several authors, and amongst those some of undeniable veracity, as Grotius, Scaliger, and Sionita, to have made use of the following artful stratagem, to deceive  
the

the credulous and unthinking Arabians into a belief that he had frequent conferences with the Holy Spirit, and received from him his mission as a prophet, and the new doctrines he was about to propagate. This piece of deceit, though practised with too much success, he carried on in the following manner, which joined to the victories he obtained, made his religion be embraced by all ranks of people; for Mahometanism though begun in deception, was established by the sword. He procured a beautiful young pigeon, of this species we have described, which from the extraordinary whiteness of its plumage, was no degrading symbol of purity and the celestial dove. This bird he brought up by hand, making it so very tame and familiar, that he taught it to take its food out of his ear, which might easily be brought to pass, especially if he used to put hemp or rape seed in his ear, which all pigeons are immoderately fond of, till at length the pigeon frequently flew upon his shoulder, putting its beak into his ear in search of its food. This bird he shamefully imposed upon the Arabians to be the visible appearance of the Holy Ghost, whispering  
the



106 *The Lace Pigeon, and Frill Back.*

the dictates of the Almighty, and teaching him the precepts of his new law, and from hence this bird receives the name of Mahomet, but it is frequently, though corruptly called mawmet.

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THE LACE PIGEON.

This species of the pigeon is in great plenty in some parts of Holland, where it was originally bred, though at present very scarce in this country: it is about the size of a common runt, and not unlike it in make and shape, but the colour of its plumage is always white; it differs in the make of its feathers from all other pigeons, whose plumage is composed of a close smooth feather; but the web or fibres of the feather in this bird, appear quite unconnected with each other, and as it were disunited throughout its whole plumage, in short, the make of its feather is very peculiar, and gives the bird a pretty though singular appearance, and from hence it derives its name of lace pigeon.

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THE FRILL-BACK.

This pigeon, like that last described, is remarkable only for the peculiar turn of  
its.



its feathers, all of which look as if they had been distinctly and purposely raised at the end with a small round pointed instrument, after such a manner as to make a small hollow in each of them; or as if the bird had been under the hands of some of our modern hair dressers, and had its plumage frizzed and curled at the ends. It is in size less than the common runt, though very much like it in shape; and its plumage is always white.

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THE SMITER.

This pigeon in shape, make, and diversity of plumage, nearly resembles the tumbler, the size excepted, it being a much larger bird. The smiter is supposed to be the same species that the Dutch call the drager; when it flies it has a peculiar tremulous motion with its wings, and commonly rises in a circular manner, the male for the generality, flying much higher than the female, and though it does not tumble, it has a particular manner of falling and flabbing its wings, with which it makes so loud a noise as to be heard at a great distance, which is frequently the cause of its shattering or breaking its quill-feathers.

THE

## THE CHINESE PIGEON.

This beautiful little pigeon is a native of Pekin in China, and was imported into Europe in some of the companies ships; it is only to be seen in the collections of the rich and curious, who have always large cages, or a distinct aviary built on purpose for them. It is a very scarce and dear bird, and in our opinion one of the greatest curiosities of the pigeon kind, therefore for the satisfaction of our readers, we shall give a particular description of it.

This pigeon in size is rather less than the common swallow; the sides of the head are yellow, but the top, and the space round the eyes are of an ash-colour; it has a blueish ash-coloured beak, and the irides of its eyes are of a fine white: the extreme feathers on each side the head and neck are red, and there are blue feathers about the rise of the wings. The hind part of the neck and back are brown; and the extremities of the feathers black; those on the shoulders are lighter, and variegated at the ends with black and white. The first and last covert feathers  
are

*Rules to distinguish a Cock from a Hen.* 109

are black, but are white on their external edges; the long feathers of the wings are black, the edges of which are tipped with white; and the belly and breast are of a lovely pale rose colour. The tail, which is composed of twelve feathers, is a mixture of dusky and bright; the legs and feet are red, and the claws black.

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*Rules to be observed in distinguishing a  
Cock from a Hen.*

Having given the best description of all the fancy birds, and also of those called toys, that are bred or kept in this kingdom, we shall next proceed to give every other necessary piece of information, as may tend to illustrate this subject, and gratify the wishes of the curious in the fancy of pigeons. As it is a matter of some difficulty to form a right judgment whether a pigeon be a cock or a hen, for in this particular some of the ablest and best fanciers have erred: in order therefore to clear up this point, we have drawn up the following rules; a proper observance of which, joined to a little experience, will soon enable the young fancier to become an adept in this particular.

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I. The

110 *Instructions for coupling of Pigeons.*

1. The cock has always a longer and stouter breast-bone than the hen.

2. His head and cheeks are broader and fuller, and he has a bolder look than the hen.

3. The vent in the hen, and the bone near the vent, is always more open than in the cock.

4. In young pigeons, that which squeaks longest in the nest, generally proves to be a hen; and where there are two in the nest, the largest usually turns out to be a cock.

5. The coo of the cock is longer, a great deal louder and more masculine than the hen's, and the cock often makes a half round in his playing, which the hen seldom does, though a warm lively hen will sometimes shew, and play very like a cock, and when lecherous will even attempt to tread another pigeon.

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*Instructions for coupling, or matching the Pigeons.*

It has already been observed, that pigeons are very constant, seldom or never suing for a divorce, when once mated to each other, except in times of long-illness,



*Instructions for coupling of Pigeons.* III

ness, death, or old age; yet it is sometimes attended with difficulty to make the fancy birds couple to your liking.

In order to effect this, let two coops be built close together, these are commonly named matching places by the fanciers, let there be a partition made of lath placed between them, that the birds may see each other, and it may easily be so contrived that the birds may feed out of the same vessels: supply them well with hemp-feed, which will soon make them wanton, and when you perceive the hen to sweep her tail and shew to the cock, as he plays in the adjoining pen, you may then remove her to his pen and they will soon agree. When this convenience is wanting, and you are compelled at first to put them both into one coop, be careful to put the cock in the first, for three or four days, that he may get master of the coop, particularly if the hen is a termagant, or else they will quarrel so much as to end in an irreconcilable hatred ever after. But when the cock is once master of his house, he will always maintain it, and by a stout and well-timed resistance, make his mistress yield to his authority.

When the pigeons are once matched, give them the liberty of the loft, and the privilege of fixing upon what nest they please; but when you have a mind to fix them to any particular nest, make use of the following method. Get a machine made of lath, the length of the breeding places, let this be enclosed with boards both at bottom and top; this machine may project out as far as the loft will admit; one of the top boards must lift up with hinges, for the conveniency of supplying them with food; this may be placed before any nest, and the pigeons put in it; when after they have remained in this situation about a week, let the machine be removed, which ought to be done in the night, and they will not leave that nest.

The same method may be practised with success, in order to prevent the strain from being vitiated by an improper tread, which a very wanton hen will frequently admit of. Confine them by this method till the hen has deposited both her eggs, then let it be removed that they may enjoy their liberty, till the hen has fed off her soft meat, when she will become falacious again, and must be confined as  
already

*Directions for erecting a Loft for Pigeons. 113*

already described; and by this means the strain will be kept pure and unmixed. This method is attended with trouble, and is only worth bestowing on the best pigeons; as for those intended for the spit, it is of very little consequence whether they are bastardized or not.

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*Directions for the erecting and furnishing of a Loft for Pigeons.*

In the former part of this work, we gave full and ample instructions for the building, stocking and management of the pigeon-house or dove-cote; but as this related to country breeders, and those who keep them for market, it is both necessary and incumbent on us that we give some plain and useful directions for the building and preparing a loft for the reception of the better and more curious breed of these birds. And that this work may be made equally useful to the gentlemen of the fancy, we have spared no pains in procuring the advice of some of the most experienced fanciers upon this head, and shall proceed in the most obvious and intelligent manner that we are able; for though, as has been before observed, the common pigeons give but

K 3 little



114 *Directions for erecting a Loft for Pigeons.*

little trouble, yet the fancy birds require a great deal of attendance.

When a fancier has an intention of building a loft on purpose for the keeping of pigeons; let it be a standing rule to place the front facing the south, or south-west, as being the warmest quarters; but as few persons erect a room for that use only, it may be proper to take notice, that any place, where there is room enough may be made subservient for that purpose. Some break a hole through the roof of the house, and there lay a platform of what size best suits them; but in doing this, particular care must be taken to erect proper fences to keep out those terrible enemies to the pigeon tribe, the cats. Nevertheless it is essentially necessary to train up a cat on purpose to be kept in the loft; for this end procure a kitten, and as it increases in growth, and begins to notice the pigeons, heat an egg and put it to its nose, and get a dead pigeon and rub its nose with it, and beat it also with the pigeon; repeat this till the cat runs away at the sight of an egg, or dead pigeon, when laid before it, which method will so intimidate the cat, that it will neither touch the pigeons nor eggs, especially



*Directions for erecting a Loft for Pigeons.* 115

especially if it is well supplied with food : a cat thus broke in, will be found exceedingly useful in a loft, and will keep it clear of rats and mice, which are very destructive to the pigeons and their eggs. Be careful not to over stock the loft, and always allow at least two holes or breeding places for every pair ; for if they are cramped for want of room, they will not sit quiet, nor breed so well as when they have a sufficiency of room allowed them. We cannot better illustrate this last remark, than in the information given by the late Mr. Moore, who relates that he was well acquainted with a gentleman, who out of nine pair of breeding pigeons, could not raise three young ones, during the course of a whole spring and summer, only by keeping them crowded in too small a loft ; but in the beginning of September he removed the same pigeons into a larger loft, and they bred well, even then and through the greatest part of the ensuing winter, which is an indisputable proof of the bad effects of crowding too many in too contracted a habitation. The reason is obvious, salacious cocks will often be playing to, and fretting the others as they sit, and others that want  
room

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room to sit will fight for nests, and by this means both eggs and young ones are destroyed.

In erecting the breeding places, let the shelves be at least fourteen inches in breadth, and the distance between shelf and shelf twenty inches, that tall powters may not be compelled to crouch for want of height, and spoil their carriage, by getting an ill habit of playing low; let partitions be fixed upon these shelves, leaving the space of three feet between each partition, having a board nailed against the front, which serves as a blind on both sides of every partition; and by this method there will be two nests in the length of every three feet, and the pigeons will sit dark and private. Some place a partition in the middle of each nest, which is of service in hindering the young ones from running to the hen, and cooling her eggs, when she sits at the other side; for in breeding time, when the young ones are about three weeks old, the hen will lay again, if a good breeder, and leave the young ones to the care of the cock; for the easier cleaning out the nests, some have them built without any blind, being entirely left open  
in

*Directions for erecting a Loft for Pigeons.* 117

in front, but as the pigeon does not like to be disturbed when sitting, and an open fronted nest is liable to some other inconveniences, we can say nothing in favour of it. Others again, if the loft will admit of it, strenuously recommend the making of the nests on the floor, especially for the better sort of pigeons, as being far more convenient than either of the former two, in preventing those accidents which sometimes happens to the young pigeons, by their falling out of the nest, and thereby bruising or laming themselves, and also giving them an opportunity of being fed by other pigeons, as well as their parents, which is sometimes the case.

Let every nest be furnished with an unglazed earthen pan, or straw basket, both of which are made and adapted for this use, and the size should be in proportion to the pigeons it is intended for: for example, a pan proper for a tumbler, or any other small pigeon, ought to be three inches high, and about eight inches over at the top, sloping like a wash-hand basin towards the bottom; and these should be varied in proportion to the size of the pigeons: in fixing the pan or basket



118 *Directions for erecting a Loft for Pigeons.*

ket in the breeding-place, put a small wedge of wood, or a brick against the front of it, that the pigeons may get on and off the nest, without treading on the edges of the pan or basket, and by that means tilt out the eggs; when the hen has hatched, be careful not to handle the young ones, when you want to look at them, for the handling of young pigeons, often brings a scouring upon them. The basket is preferred by some, as being much the warmest, and not so subject to crack the egg when fresh laid; but the advocates for the pan say, that these difficulties are easily obviated, by a proper supply of clean straw, or frail, made soft and short; the frail as it lies hollow, and lasts a great while, is preferable to the straw; for when the young ones are able to get out of their nest, take hold of the ends of the frail, and shake off the dung and filth, and the frail will be fit for use again: it is not improper in this place to inform the reader, that gravel should be sifted on the shelves and floor, which the pigeons are fond of picking, and it is very wholesome for them, and also gives the loft a more creditable appearance, and makes it much easier to be cleaned, besides,



*Directions for erecting a Loft for Pigeons.* 119

sides, in keeping the pigeons clean, they are cleared from fleas and other vermin, which are the constant attendants of nastiness and filth, being principally bred and nourished by the dung.

As for the trap or airy, it is always built on a platform or floor of deals, on the outside of the house, and is the common passage for the going out and the coming in of the pigeons: it is made of laths, which should be nailed so close together, as not to permit a mouse to creep through. Some of these are made very small, with a door in the middle, and one on each side: which three doors are so contrived, that by the pull of a single string, like a piece of machinery, all draw up together: this contrivance is chiefly designed to trap stray pigeons, who are allured into it, by the tempting baits of hemp-seed, or rape and canary, which is strewed there for that purpose, and frequently has its desired effect. Some make two small swinging doors, on each side the trap, fixed by wires, called bolting wires, so that any pigeon may get into the trap, but cannot return back again; and also leave a square hole open at top, called a tipping hole, which is made to answer the same purpose as the swinging doors;

doors ; but without the trap is so situated as to be quite secure from the cats or rats, both these are dangerous contrivances : for either of the last mentioned animals may, by the same means, as easily enter the trap as the pigeons can, and if they once find their way in, they will make sad devastation amongst the pigeons and their eggs. Some of these places are built so wide and lofty, as to admit eight or ten people at a time, to stand or walk about in them, and have two or three rows of shelves on every side for the pigeons to rest upon, and are designed for to give room and air to those pigeons that are not suffered to fly abroad. When these places are so large they are called airies, and are of great service in keeping confined pigeons in a good state of health.

In order to complete the furniture of the loft, it must be provided with proper bottles and stands for water, and also with proper meat-boxes. It should be a large egg-bellied glass bottle, with a long neck, big enough to contain three or four gallons of water, though the shape of it is immaterial, for a piece of paste-board, hung by a string about three inches above the bottle, will always hinder them from settling

*Directions for erecting a Loft for Pigeons.* 121

settling on it, and dunging it. This bottle should be set upon a three-legged stool or stand, having a hollow at the top for the belly to rest in, that the mouth may descend into a small pan underneath, by which means the water will gradually run from the mouth of the bottle, supplying the pan with water as fast as the pigeons drink it out; this method will keep the water fresh and sweet, and the water will stop running when its surface meets the mouth of the bottle; the reason of which is obvious, though an explanation would be rather too philosophical: but we advise those who are not yet possessed of this contrivance, to make a trial of it, and it will experimentally prove the truth of this assertion.

The box for the meat should be made in the shape of a hopper, and in order to hinder them from dunging the grain, it must have a cover over the top, and then it will serve as a preservative for their food; from hence the meat descends into a shallow square box, and this is usually fenced in with rails or small holes on each side, to prevent them from stirring the grain amongst their own dung, which lies about the floor. Some leave it quite open for the benefit of the young pigeons,

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that



that they may the more easily find their way to it.

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*Observations on the Diet proper for Pigeons.*

The common dove-house pigeon, being removed, as it were, but one step from a state of nature, is hardy, and will seek its own food, living upon almost any grain; yet it is far different with the fancy birds that require some attendance, being much more delicate, and always used to tender treatment; therefore some short observations on their food is very necessary.

The pigeon is a granivorous bird, and may be fed with various sorts of grain, as wheat, barley, oats, pease, horse-beans, vetches, tares, rape and canary, or hemp-feed. But of all grains, old tares prove to be the best suited to the nature of these birds; for new tares should be given very sparingly, especially to young pigeons, as they are very liable to put them into a scouring, though old tares will have the same effect, if by any accident they have been mixed with salt, or damaged by sea-water; for though pigeons are very fond of salt, too much is very pernicious; for example: if in a voyage



voyage they are supplied with sea-water instead of fresh, it will soon kill them.

Horse-beans are esteemed the next best food to tares, but the smaller these are the better: there is a French sort called small ticks, which make good food, and are cheaper than tares, but there are two unfavourable circumstances attends these. First, they are hard of digestion, and not proper diet for pigeons who have young ones to feed. Secondly, they are improper for young pigeons, for some time after they have begun to feed themselves, as they are apt to stick in the gullet and choak them; indeed, they are dangerous for any pigeon whose gullet is small, which is the case in most of them which are long-necked. No kind of beans are fit diet for Dutch croppers, or any other large cropped pigeons, as they are apt to make them gorge. We would advise those that feed their pigeons with beans, to sometimes mix a few vetches amongst them, and to have the beans split.

Wheat, barley, oats, and pease, ought only to be given now and then for a change of diet, as they are very subject to scour them. There is a mixed diet, made of tares, beans, and pease, which is called Scotch meat, with which some

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fanciers feed their pigeons for cheapness, but care should be taken that the beans are not too large. Rape and canary, and hemp-feed, is a diet that pigeons are immoderately fond of, but this, for many substantial reasons, must not by any means be made a constant diet. It is said that a late grand duke of Tuscany was a very great fancier, and that he used to muster his pigeons by the ringing of a bell, and feed them with the stones of grapes, which are very plentiful in that country.

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*Of the Diseases incident to Pigeons, with their Method of Cure.*

In treating of the diseases relating to pigeons, we shall chiefly follow the sentiments of the late Mr. Moore, who was not only a very judicious fancier, but also a gentleman of the faculty, who spared no pains to make himself acquainted with the diseases of these birds, and to apply the best method of cure; therefore, without further apology, we shall take him for our guide.

The first disease that we shall take cognizance of, is, the corruption of the egg in the uterus; this usually arises from the over salaciousness of an unmatched hen,

hen, and proceeds from high feeding, or some other cause, who will often breed eggs without any connection with the male, though they seldom bring them to perfection, and sometimes they do not bring them forth, so that they decay in the womb: there is no remedy for this but a low diet, if you think this disorder arose from high feeding, and to match her to a cock in time.

The wet roop. In this case give them three or four pepper corns, once in three or four days, and steep a handful of green rue in their water, and as this is very wholesome, you may let all the other pigeons drink of it.

The dry roop is usually known by a dry husky cough, that always attends it, and is supposed to proceed from a cold, to which they are very subject, particularly during the time of molting: to remedy this, give them every day three or four cloves of garlick.

The canker, usually takes its rise from the cocks pecking and fighting one another: though some fanciers say, that giving them water in a metal, or a tin vessel, will bring on this disorder. In order to remove this, take burnt allum and honey, and rub the affected part every day: but



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when this has not its desired effect, dissolve five grains of Roman vitriol in half a spoonful of wine vinegar, mix it with the former medicine, and anoint the part affected. Some people strip off the scurf and make it bleed, before they apply the remedy, but we give it as our opinion that the medicine is searching enough without that.

When the flesh or wattles round the eyes of the carrier, horseman, or barb, are torn and pecked, bathe them with stale urine for several days; if this does not prove successful, dissolve two drams of allom in one ounce and a half of water, and wash the aggrieved part; but when the case is very obstinate, mix half an ounce of honey with twenty grains of red precipitate, and anoint the part, and it will certainly cure it.

Pigeons are infested with small insects, particularly during the summer months, which the fanciers call lice; when this happens smoak their feathers well with the smoak of tobacco, and it will certainly destroy them.

There is another kind of small vermin, which are very pernicious, and frequently prove fatal to the young ones in the nest,

nest, especially when first hatched, by creeping into their ears, and hindering them from thriving: to prevent this, sprinkle the dust of tobacco in the nest, and also over the young pigeons, and it will kill these vermin: they are called the blacks by some, and by others, pigeons bugs.

Gizzard-fallen, is when the gizzard sinks down to the vent; the fancy in general think it proceeds from weakness, though we are of opinion that it is rather caused by feeding on too much hemp-feed. We know of no cure for this malady, unless nature will co-operate with an alteration of diet, which in young pigeons it sometimes does.

Navel-fallen, is when there is a sort of a bag hanging down near the vent. This distemper is frequently desperate, and if the giving of them clary, or some other strengthening things of a similar nature, does not effect a cure, we can recommend nothing that will.

Pigeons are subject to be pap-arsed, as it is termed by the fancy. This malady arises either from a natural weakness, or from a lecherous cock's mounting his hen too frequent: there is no cure for this, except flying, and the parting of  
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them sometimes to make them more abstemious. Young pigeons and carriers that are not much flown are most liable to it.

Some pigeons, as powters, and crop-pers, are apt to overcharge or gorge themselves, that is, when they have fasted rather longer than usual, they will eat such a quantity that they cannot digest it, but it will stay and corrupt in the crop, and be the death of the pigeon; when this happens, take the ensuing advice; put the gorged bird in a tight stocking, with its feet downward, stroaking up the crop, that the overloaded bag of meat may not hang down; then hang up the stocking on a nail, keeping it in this posture, only supplying it with a little water now and then, till the food is digested, and this will frequently cure it; but when it is taken out of the stocking, put it in a coop or open basket, feeding it but very moderately, for if left to itself it will gorge again. When this method does not succeed, slit the crop from the bottom with a sharp pair of scissars or penknife, take out the corrupted meat, wash the crop, and sew it up again. This method has often proved successful, though



though the crop will lose its roundness : some take off the crop by ligature, that is, tying that part of the crop that contains the undigested food, tight round with a string, and let it remain till it drops off. This method never fails, but the shape of the crop is entirely ruined for ever after.

The vertigo, or as it is commonly called by the fancy, the megrims, is a disease, in which the pigeon flutters about at random, with its head reverted in such a manner, that its beak rests on its back. This malady is pronounced incurable by most fanciers, and if it baffles the power of the following remedy it is so ; infuse in half a pint of water, one ounce and a half of spirit of lavender, and a dram of the spirit of sal ammoniac that has been distilled with quick lime ; in the course of a day force down the bird's throat about a spoonful and a half of this composition, and if the bird finds benefit, repeat the medicine every third or fourth day, only lessening the quantity, and in the intermediate days give it a clove of garlick, or three or four pepper corns ; if after a trial you perceive no amendment,

ment, it will be best to kill it out of the way.

When pigeons do not molt freely, or are at a stand in their molting, so that they do not throw their feathers kindly, it is a never failing sign of a bad state of health: to amend this, the following method will be of service; put them in some warm place, and pull out their tail feathers, mixing a good quantity of hemp-seed with their common food, also a little clary or saffron thrown into their water, though some prefer cochineal, or elder-berries for this use. Pigeons are also liable to a scouring, particularly in molting time, which makes them very weak, faint, and thin: as a remedy for this, give them pump-water with a lump of chalk in it, or force the quantity of two horse-beans down their throats every day; if this fails, pour some smith's forge water down their throats which is very binding. The grit that remains in the trough under a grind-stone, where they grind edge tools, is very good for a scouring, but must be used in very small quantities, it being of a very costive nature.

The distemper called the small pox, which breaks out in eruptions or pustules, full

full of yellow matter, on their bodies, wings, and legs, is cured by opening the pustules, and applying burnt allom and honey, or touching them with Roman vitriol.

When pigeons are sick, heavy, or drooping their wings, give them once a day, a couple of spiders rolled up in butter, and if you think it safe to venture them, let them fly.

When pigeons are lame, or the ball of their foot swelled, either from cold, the being cut with glass, or any other accident, spread some Venice turpentine on a piece of brown paper, put it to the part affected, and it will heal it in a few days.

The flesh-wen, is a fleshy tumor, which arises on the joints of the legs or wings: this may be either opened or cut off; if opened, take out the kernel, and wash it with allom and water; if cut off, the part may be afterwards healed with almost any salve.

The bone wen is a hard tumor, growing upon the joints as the last; this is very rarely cured, and the bird affected with it will not breed: some attempt to cure it with a mixture of black soap and quick lime; but if this is suffered to lie  
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on too long, or made too strong, it will eat off the leg, or any other part where it is applied, it being a strong caustic.

The core. This malady is so called, from its resemblance to the core of an apple; it is hard, and usually of a yellow colour interspersed with red, and is mostly seated in the anus or vent. This must be ripened; to effect which, keep the pigeon loose, by giving it a gentle purge of tobacco, a small quantity will do; this will sometimes make them discharge the core themselves, if not, when ripe it must be drawn out.

These birds, particularly the common sort, are frequently afflicted with scabs on the back and breast, which make the old ones so weak that they cannot fly abroad in search of food, and absolutely kill the young ones; the following recipe is recommended as a cure. A pound of dill-seed, a pound of fennel-seed, and the same quantity of cummin-seed, an ounce and a half of assafoetida, a quarter of a pound of bay-salt, and of common salt the same quantity. Mix all these ingredients with some fine clean clay, together with a small quantity of flour. This being prepared, bake it in  
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two pots, and set it on a stand in the pigeon-house, and the birds will continue to pick it till they are cured.

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*Some Remarks on the Keepers of Pigeons.*

It will not be improper at the close of this treatise, to take notice of the distinction which real pigeon fanciers make between themselves and pigeon-keepers. Such persons then who keep good of the kind, whether carriers, powters, tumblers, dragoons, horsemen, runts, jacobines, turbits, barbs, nuns, spots, owls, trumpeters, finnikins, &c are named fanciers; on the reverse, those who keep rubbish are stiled pigeon-keepers, of which last tribe there are an incredible number. It is really astonishing, that any person will give loft-room to such as are not worth the tares they eat, and can only be accounted for, by supposing such persons, to be ignorant of the bad qualities and imperfections of the several sorts they keep: if they breed for the dish only, even then, their table might be more fully supplied by the better sort; for the expence of keeping is equal the same in either, the only difference is in the first

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buying of a few pair. Should any objection arise to the first purchase of the better sort, we inform the reader that it is much the cheapest in the end, to give a good price for a couple of pair of valuable young birds, who in a little time, would so well stock his loft, as to repay his purchase with interest, powters and Leghorn runts excepted, for the reasons already given, than to begin with bad birds, at two shillings a pair, the value of which can never be raised, nor the breed mended.

To those who keep pigeons for the sake of good breeding, we would recommend bastard-bred pigeons, such as powting-horsemen, powting-dragoons, from a powder or cropper, and a Leghorn; or a cock cropper, and a hen carrier; the reason is, these pigeons frequently breed ten pair of young ones in a year, for the little puff of wind derived from the powder, gives them a heat and mirth, which occasions them to be continually playing or courting; and when they have young ones, they feed them well. A cock powder will tread any hen that will let him, at any time; and part him from his old mate, and he will match to another  
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in a few days. Besides bastard bred pigeons, are the most serviceable for those who breed them to supply the table.

An author of good repute, in speaking of foods, after having advised to the choice of young pigeons that are tender, fleshy, and well fed, proceeds as follows, "They are nourishing, somewhat binding, strengthening, and provoke urine; they are looked upon to be good for cleansing the reins, and to expel the gross matters that stick there. As a pigeon grows old, so proportionably does its flesh become drier and more solid, harder of digestion, and so fit to produce gross and melancholy humours; and hence it is that some authors have condemned the use of pigeons, and look upon them to be bad food: they agree at all times with any age and constitution; but those that are melancholy ought to make use of them more moderately than other persons."

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*Some useful Intelligence relating to the  
Generation and Incubation of Pigeons.*

In treating of this subject, we must candidly acknowledge, that we are somewhat indebted to the late ingenious Mr.

Moore, for the light he has thrown upon it; but more particularly to the celebrated discoverer of the circulation of the blood, in his excellent treatise of the generation of animals.

All animals therefore are distinguished into three distinct species: viviparous, or such as are brought forth alive, in their proper make: vermiparous, or such as derive their form from a worm: and oviparous, or such as are produced from an egg; though, in fact, the foetus of all animals originally proceed from an egg, the only difference is, that in some animals this egg is nourished into maturity in the uterus; whereas all the various classes of the feathered tribes emit, or lay an egg, and from it mature their young by incubation. The pigeon is an oviparous bird, and may truly be called a bird, for all that appertain to this genus, feed their young ones for some time after they are hatched; but on the contrary, all the young ones of the fowl kind will seek for their own food, and feed themselves almost as soon as they are freed from the shell of that egg in which they were confined.

Nature forms in the upper matrix, or ovary of the female bird, a great number  
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of small yolks, growing together in the nature of a bunch of grapes, from which similitude Dr. Harvey names it a vitellary, and also tells us, that in pigeons, he has noticed this parcel of eggs to be all of the same size, two only excepted, which were larger than the rest, and were now ready to drop into the lower uterus, or womb. The cock, in the act of coition, fertilizes these eggs, and by an astonishing, though mystical operation of nature, renders them prolific.

It is the opinion of many eminent anatomists, that all the eggs a female bird will ever lay, are contained in the vitellary or cluster, and that when this number is exhausted, she will become sterile or barren; which has made some artful people, in order to deceive mankind, and sell a useless bird, oil the vent of a barren hen, and force an egg into it, to pass it upon the credulous purchaser for one that is not barren. If any of our readers should be thus imposed upon, that they may not let slip the breeding seasons, and be at the expence of keeping such a hen matched to a good cock, the following method will inform them whether



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ther she is barren or not. When the cock drives her hard to nest, give her a pair of eggs to hatch, and let her bring up the young ones; and if you value her, repeat this method two or three times; and, if she is not barren, this, and cross-matching her, that is, match her to another cock, and it will render her fruitful.

The wanton dalliances practised by this bird during the time of its courtship, is in a manner very engaging and peculiar to it. The cock when salacious, will by a voice at that time exceedingly sweet and pleasing, and by several endearing and pretty gestures, woo the female, and endeavour to gain her affections; she, when complying, soon discovers it by her motions, as spreading her wings, nodding her head, and sweeping her tail; from hence they proceed to billing, that is, the hen puts her beak into the cock's, who appears as if feeding her; after this she will squat, and immediately receives his favour, by which she is rendered prolific; they will then seek for a nest, or some convenient place to deposit their eggs, into which they will carry such necessaries as best suits their purpose; some making a good nest, others hardly any at all.

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When the hen is near the time of her laying, the cock will follow her from place to place, not allowing her to be at peace any where but in her nest. And here it is to be observed that some cocks are so very intent, that at this time, they will hardly permit a hen to eat; which will make her very weak, and frequently cause her to lay an imperfect or thin-shelled egg. The surest method of remedying this inconvenience, is to remove the cock from her, till the egg arrives to a greater degree of perfection in the uterus.

Though pigeons make a great encrease in a year, it does not arise from any quantity of eggs they lay at one time: for they never lay more than two, and directly proceed to incubation, but from the frequency of the hatchings, which if they are good breeders, usually happens once in five or six weeks. After a pigeon has laid her first egg, she rests a day between, and on the following day lays another: it is customary for them to stand over the first egg, which is termed irregular incubation, till the second is laid, and then sit close, that both young ones may be hatched nearly at once: though some will sit close on the first, and by that means bring one young one two days sooner

sooner than the other. During the time of a pigeon's incubation, the trouble is equally divided between the cock and hen, as has already been observed in the natural history of pigeons. But at the end of nineteen days, the fancier should be careful to observe whether the eggs are hatched or not, for the two following particular reasons :

1st. It sometimes happens that the old ones do not sit close, and the young ones for want of a due warmth, have not strength sufficient to extricate themselves out of the shell, and so perish for want of air and proper nourishment : for the sustenance it received from the internal part of the egg, is by this time exhausted, or dried up ; whenever a misfortune of this kind happens, and you perceive the egg to be cracked or chipped with the exertion of the young one, break the shell all round with your nail, or the head of a pin, and help the little captive to get free.

2. When the eggs get addled, or any accident happens, that the pigeons cannot hatch, be careful to provide them a pair, or at least one young one to feed off their soft meat ; otherwise it will make them very sick, and cause them to lay again too soon, which will greatly weaken them.

F I N I S.



